

1947

The Sermon On The Mount: "The Constitution of Christianity"

Harvey Scott

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The Sermon On The Mount

"The Constitution of Christianity"



HARVEY SCOTT

Hubert Roach
840 33rd S.E.
Paris, Texas 75460

THE CHRISTIAN HELPER

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The Sermon On The Mount

"The Constitution of Christianity"

By

HARVEY SCOTT, MINISTER
Walnut Street Church of Christ
Texarkana, Texas



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PREFACE

This book is the result of a challenge which was given to me one Sunday morning at the Polytechnic Church of Christ in Fort Worth as we were leaving the building.

Just as we had come out of the auditorium, O. P. Mayfield, one of the elders, looked me straight in the eye and said, "Preacher, I want you to preach some sermons on The Sermon on the Mount. I want to see if you are big enough to do it."

This was one of the greatest challenges ever presented to me. I accepted it, and began at once to make special preparation for those sermons. I thought at the time that I was big enough to preach anything in the Bible, but I was mistaken. I was not big enough then, and I am not yet, because there are too many lessons in the Bible yet to be learned. However, this has been one of the richest studies of my life, and I shall be eternally grateful to the memory of O. P. Mayfield for this challenge.

In delivering this material in sermon form mention was made that The Sermon on the Mount is the constitution of Christianity. One Sunday morning at the Walnut Street Church of Christ, Judge Reuben A. Hall, one of the elders, and Chief Justice of the Court of Civil Appeals, stated: "The Sermon on the Mount is not only the constitution of Christianity, it is also the Christian's Bill of Rights." For this statement, I am deeply grateful to Judge Hall, and shall have a deeper appreciation of the teaching of Jesus as I continue my study of "The Teaching on the Hill"

It is hoped that by this study we shall be able to draw aside the curtain far enough for you to see the beauties and the glories of Christianity, and in turn to inspire you to a more careful study of this Masterpiece of our Lord.

May you be led to a deeper appreciation of and a greater interest in the teaching of Jesus as you attempt to "follow in the steps which He has left," is my prayer as I send it on its mission .

Harvey Scott
August 19, 1947

*All things whatsoever ye
would that men should do to
you, do ye even so to them.*

—Matthew 7:12.

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Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

The Constitution of Christianity

I. JESUS THE MASTER TEACHER.

Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, a city five miles to the south of Jerusalem, and 4,000 feet above the Dead Sea which is only fifteen miles to the east. He was reared in Nazareth of Galilee, sixteen miles to the west of the Sea of Galilee which is 682 feet below sea level. He was obedient unto his parents here as he grew in stature and in wisdom and increased in favor with both God and man. At the age of twelve he astonished his mother when he was found in the Temple of Jerusalem "sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions." See Luke 2:46. He continued to astonish the people with His teaching for "He taught as one having authority and not as the scribes."

No character has had the influence upon the lives of men and women as the life and teaching of Jesus. Although He lived in the land of Palestine and taught around Jerusalem and about the Sea of Galilee, yet His influence was not confined to this small country nor to the race of people among whom He was born; but His life and teaching has influenced every nation where His story has been told and has affected the lives of individuals from that time until now. No other person has been able to influence so many people so long. He grew not only in favor, both with God and man, but He continued to grow in favor with men even until our own day. The land where Jesus and his teaching is not known is a land where few, if any, of us would want to spend the rest of our days. Others have influenced a few people beyond the borders of the country in which they have lived, but none have been universal in their influence as has Jesus. He is the leader and example for all people and for all time.

Listen to what he has to say of himself: "I am the way, I am the truth, I am the vine, I am the life, I will rise from the dead, I am the resurrection, I am from above, I am the light of the world, I am greater than Solomon, I am greater than the temple, all power is given unto me, I came down from heaven, he that hath seen me hath seen the Father. Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Ye call me Master and Lord; and ye say well for so I am, heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." When we consider these sayings of Jesus, we must conclude that He was either insane or He was a visitor from another world.

All characters that have ever lived other than Jesus have never been so good or so wise but that we can imagine them better or wiser, but He reached the point of perfection in all the things that He did as well as in what He said. Men under severe trials and in persecutions will say and do things of which later they will have regrets, but Jesus was as calm and deliberate under the severest persecutions that man could heap upon Him as He was on the hillside surrounded by those who loved and served Him. No one was ever able to catch Him off His guard and cause Him to say something whereby they could later accuse Him. He was as much at ease before the high court of the Jews and in Pilate's judgment hall during His trial as He was on the hill while teaching the multitudes. He manifested in the superlative degree all the good traits of character that have ever been manifested in a small way by man. He was not only a good man, but we was the best that ever lived. He was not only kind, but He was the greatest sympathetic character to be found in all the world's history because He knew the heart of man and understood. He was never too busy to help those in need, and He never felt Himself too good to lend a helping hand to the outcast when they desired his assistance. He never turned them away without the advice that could come only from the Master Teacher. He said that "I am the bread of life," and He gave the world the greatest banquet that was ever given to the sons of men, and today we have the golden opportunity of sitting at His table and feasting upon the "bread that was sent down from heaven." He said that "I am the water of life," and he who drinks from this fountain will never thirst, but will receive the complete satisfaction of the soul. We should come to this teacher with our baskets empty and they will be filled not with the provisions of men but with those things furnished by Him who "spake as never man spake."

In all the recorded actions of Jesus there is not the slightest indication that He did wrong or thought evil of any one. His treatment of others was perfect. He did good unto all men, whether they were His friends or His enemies, and stood always ready to lift men upon a higher plane and point them to higher ideals. He was respectful to the sinner, though He denounced sin in all. He had no patience with hypocrisy, whether found in friend or enemy. He associated with sinners, telling them of a better life and never becoming influenced by their sins. He never did anything from a selfish motive, for He said, "I do nothing of myself," and "I do always those things that are pleasing unto my Father," and "I came not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me." And on behalf of those who drove the cruel nails through His hands and feet, He said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

Many teachers have lived but none like Jesus of Nazareth.

Others have taught certain universal truths, but Jesus taught lessons that no other teacher had ever known, for "He is the only original thinker." He set himself forth as an original teacher by saying, "Ye have heard it said, but I say unto you." He relied not upon what others had said for His information, but He claimed that He was the original source of truth. He said that His teaching was not an old garment patched up, or an old patched-up system, but that He taught new lessons, and He gave new commandments. He taught nothing unsuitable. None of His lessons can be improved upon. If man were to rewrite one of His parables, it would be marred like the clay in the hands of a poor potter. His lessons can not be given in fewer words or in more beautiful and simpler language. No one ever taught with as great ease, for no teacher was ever so sure of what He said. He taught with simplicity the sublimest truths with such conviction that His enemies were never able to answer Him. He taught with such clearness that "the common people heard Him gladly," and at the same time He taught with such profoundness as to silence the trained Jewish teachers of Jerusalem, and no teacher to this day has been able to "sound the depths" of what He said. He completely exhausted every question with which He dealt, yet He did it with a brevity unknown by any other teacher. His teaching is held in as high esteem today as when it first fell from His lips in the hill country of Palestine, and it grows sweeter to the Christian as he nears the end of his journey.

Jesus spoke with perfect simplicity while dealing with man's greatest problems. His style is neither eastern nor western but universal. There is no speech which goes to the heart of man with such directness as the teaching of Jesus. We are told that there is not enough logic in all his teachings to form one syllogism, yet he dealt with the profoundest truths that can engage the mind of man as He taught with the authority of heaven, reaching His conclusions without the aid of logic; for He is the only original thinker to be found in all history. There was never a shadow of doubt about any question presented to Him, either upon earth or in heaven, in time or in eternity, for "all things were given to Him of God." The questions He asked were not for information but to fix the attention of those present upon an important lesson. He needed no instruction from man, for He knew the mind of man and how to instruct it, for He was its maker. He knew the future as well as the past, and spoke accurately of both. "He stood between two eternities, and was crucified between the twilights of two worlds."

That Jesus of Nazareth was the founder of Christianity no student of history will deny. That Christianity has within it the highest ideals, and is motivated by the highest purposes, and has for its goal the highest accomplishments, will not be denied by him who knows

what Christianity is. It contains not one selfish motive and shows no respecter of persons, for it deals with all upon the same plane and knows all men for just what they are. The heart of Christianity is to be found in "The Teaching on the Hill" recorded in Matthew, chapters five, six, and seven. Matthew tells us that "seeing the multitudes, Jesus went up into a mountain; and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: And He opened His mouth and taught them." Jesus saw the multitude as the people actually were, and then He saw them as they should be. His teaching which follows was for the purpose of helping the people to find themselves as they were and then to see where they should be with the solution as to the necessary change that they should make. This Sermon on the Mount has been termed the "Constitution of Christianity." Its ideals have never been surpassed nor its truth exhausted. It has been called Jesus' Great Manifesto. If the truths found in this declaration of Jesus were practiced in the lives of the people now our economic problems would be solved.

In comparison with Jesus, all other teachers are but a candle which fades into insignificance, while He shines brighter and brighter unto a perfect day. They are but a gleam of light while He is as the brightness of the noonday sun. They are but drop of water while He is as the ocean. They are but a taste while He is as an eternal banquet. All of this is given unto humanity in the teaching which our Lord has revealed through the guidance of the Holy Spirit and is recorded in the New Testament, and by the providence of God has been preserved for us even today.

II. JESUS BEGINS HIS TEACHING, Matthew 4:12-17.

"Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; the people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up. From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matthew 4:12-17.

Matthew does not mention Jesus' early ministry in Judea. He begins his story of the work of our Lord in Galilee with the statement quoted above; that when he heard of the imprisonment of John he went into Galilee and began to teach. Here we have an account of the beginning of Jesus' teaching in Galilee, for he came into the world to be a preacher—"to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Luke 4:19-21. The message God had for the world, Jesus began to

publish; for it "first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." Hebrews 2:3.

A. The Time of His Teaching. When Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he went into Galilee. The cry of the sufferings of the people of God are always heard by him. "The ears of the Lord are open unto the prayers of the saints." 1 Peter 3:12. But he that "turneth his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination unto the Lord." Proverbs 28:9. God remembers the bonds and afflictions that abide his people.

Jesus did not go into Galilee until he hears of John's imprisonment. John is given time to prepare the way of the Lord. He leaves the scene of action before Jesus begins his work. John is eclipsed before Jesus shines forth; for when Jesus the Son of Righteousness begins to shine, all other teachers whom God had chosen and had given to the world cease to shine and are lost in the brightness of the light of the world as the moon and the stars lose their brightness when the sun rises and fills the earth with its light and glory. This brightness of Jesus who is the light of the world outshines all the brightness of the teachers before him, and all that shall ever follow him, even until the end of time.

The work of John and the prophets of the Old Testament were to introduce Jesus into the world; and when God had put all his words in the mouth of Jesus and had declared from the mountain that "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him," the world is to hear Jesus as God's representative from that time on. Matthew 17:1-5. "In him dwells all the fulness of the godhead." Colossians 2:9. There is nothing left for anyone else; for "all authority has been given into my hands," said Jesus. Matthew 28:18.

B. The Place of Jesus' Teachings. It is in Galilee, a place at the northern end of Palestine, and looked upon with contempt. The Jews did not believe that anything good could come out of Nazareth, a city of Galilee, and the home of Jesus. The men of this country were stout and considered fit for soldiers; but not polite and were thus unqualified for scholars. Here Jesus goes to lay the foundation for the gospel. In this, as in many other things, Jesus humbles himself.

But the particular city which he chooses for his headquarters is not his home city—Nazareth. There was good reason for leaving this city; for the men of that city thrust him out from among them. Luke 4:29. He gave these people an opportunity to accept him, but they rejected Him and forced Him to leave their city. He leaves, shaking the dust off his feet as a testimony against them. Thus, even today, men and women may be offered the gospel, but when they slight it and thrust it away—not choosing to live according to its teaching—God leaves them to their own doom; for "the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to all that will accept it." Romans

1:16. If this gospel does not appeal to an individual, God has nothing else to offer. Jesus would not stay long where he was not welcomed. Neither will he today. How far he must be from some who have neither room nor time for Him in their hearts. "There was no room for him in the inn" when he was born; for some, there is no room for him in their lives now.

Leaving Nazareth Jesus comes to Capernaum and there makes his headquarters, although he, himself, says that he had nowhere to lay his head. This city lies near the Sea of Galilee, through which flows the Jordan river. Jesus received a welcome in Capernaum and multitudes follow him. Even though some reject him when they find that he has more to offer them than the "few loaves and fishes" for which they were following him.

But unhappy indeed are those who do not accept the Christ, but think that they can direct their own steps, and steer their own lives across the sea of time and land their souls safely on the shores of Eternity. But Alas! What a disappointment there shall be when they shall have crossed the river of death and stand on the other side and take their first view of that eternal world and there find that they have no one to guide them into the City of the Everlasting God. Here "the sun never sets and the flowers never fade," but they will be deprived of the right to sit down in the shade of the tree of life and eat of its fruits and live forever. What a tragedy!

"The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up." Matthew 4:14-16. Here the prophet foretells of a greater darkness to befall those who reject Jesus than befell Israel in their captivity. The punishment for the Jewish nation for their rejection of Jesus was far greater than anything that had gone before. Those led captive to Babylon saw light in their bondage which Matthew applies here to the appearing of the gospel among them. But for the Jewish nation which rejected Jesus, there is no light given. They rejected the light of the world and thus either must walk in darkness with all who reject him now, or come to that light and walk therein. God has no other light for the world. Jesus is the light of the world.

C. The Theme of Jesus' Teaching. "From that time Jesus began to preach and to teach, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'" This was the time from his coming into Galilee. He had been teaching before this in Judea, but Matthew chooses to leave that part of his teaching out of his story probably because it was not so public and constant as it now began to be in Galilee.

Jesus spends much time in preparation before he begins his work. Few men today are fully prepared for the work before them, especially is this true of those who are offering to teach the people the Word of the Lord. Many have not spent enough time alone with

God in prayer: they have not fully learned what the gospel is, or how it is to be applied unto the lives of men and women, especially unto their own lives.

The theme of Jesus' teaching now is the same as that of John—"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," or is coming, or is drawing near. The Jews had been looking for this kingdom for many years, but their conception of the nature and extent of the kingdom was different from that which Jesus proclaimed. They were expecting that their Messiah when he came would establish again the Jewish nation and bring into subjection all the other nations around them. This he would do with his throne in the city of Jerusalem in the land of Palestine. This was not the conception which Jesus had of the kingdom, and it certainly is not the conception which he taught. Jesus said that "My kingdom is not of this world." His kingdom was to be a spiritual kingdom with his throne in the city of Jerusalem which is above, and the mother of us all. See Galatians 4:21-31.

When Jesus begins his public teaching he gathers around him his disciples for the purpose of teaching them for the work which he will have for them to do after he leaves them. These men had seen him before, but here they begin their constant association with him. They are to be witnesses of his miracles, his teaching, his life, and his resurrection—in fact of all things which he did in the land of the Jews. To this group of men Jesus manifested himself as to no other group of people. They are to be his teachers through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Matthew 4:18-22.

These disciples were not selected from among the trained and cultured of Jerusalem, but from the untrained and uncultured of Galilee whose speech betrayed them. God chose the foolish things of this world to confound the wise. God has thus made "foolish the wisdom of the world." 1 Corinthians 1:20. These men were not from among the more polished men of Galilee, but were fishermen from the sea that the glory might be in the message and not in the messenger. These men were not trained in the schools of the Egyptians, neither had they attended the schools of the Rabbis in the city of Jerusalem: but they did attend the school of the Lord, and were trained by the greatest teacher the world has ever known. This they did when they followed the Master from one end of the land of Palestine to that of the other, and listened as he "spake as never man spake," teaching perfect lessons and perfectly practicing the lessons which He gave. Even after these men spent their time with Jesus, they were given the Holy Spirit to guide them into all the truth. John 16:7-15.

This selection of teachers on the part of Jesus is no example of selecting the teachers of Christianity now. The teachers of God's Word now must "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that need not be ashamed handling aright the word of truth."

2 Timothy 2:15. Those who would preach Christ now must learn of him—must know His will and how to apply it to the lives of men and women. This they learn from the New Testament.

In following the Christ then, these disciples left all. To follow the Christ today, one must be willing to part with all he has rather than not follow the Lord. Yes, it cost something to be a Christian. It will cost something in time, efforts, and money. But it is worth more than you can pay for it. What then is your soul worth? In order that your soul might be redeemed, it cost heaven its best; are you willing to do less for the Lord?

This gives us the background of "The Sermon on the Mount," and prepares us to better understand it. We have noticed the Teacher, the Time of His beginning, the Place where He began, and the Theme of His message. This will help us then to better study the teaching which He gave as recorded by Matthew in chapters five, six, and seven. We also have the selection of the twelve who are to be with the Master in his teaching, in order that they may take that message through the guidance of the Holy Spirit and make it known unto the world.

III. CHRISTIAN CHARACTERISTICS, Matthew 5:1-12.

Christian living is a series of decisions leading toward the destination of our life forever in heaven in a perfect state of relationship with our maker. Then how important it is that we live this life or make these decisions in a manner well pleasing unto Him before whom we shall be called upon to stand in the end.

The harp holds in its wires the possibilities of the noblest chords of music that will lift men and women out of their valley of despondency and despair and plant their feet high up on the mountain side if only there is some one to properly strike those strings, otherwise they must hang dull and useless and of no inspiration to humanity. What a lesson this presents unto us today in our efforts to strike properly the chords of our own hearts, and the hearts of those with whom we come in contact, through the decisions which we make in our efforts to live the Christian life. How well are you able to strike the strings of your own heart that they may present unto the world the heavenly music that will lift men and women from their valley of doubt and unbelief and inspire them to higher planes of living on the mountains of God? But the discords that are often made through the improper decisions of life discourage others and dim their sight to the beauties that are in store for those who will labor for them. Are your heart strings in tune with the infinite?

There is only one life for you to live. How are you living it? You want to do the best with this life that is possible for you; you want to make the most out of it for yourself, and for those who are near and dear to you either by the ties of nature or of association.

You will want to accomplish all the good possible with the energies and powers which you possess. In order that you may accomplish the best that is within you, it will be necessary that you have a standard which is to serve as your guide in all of these decisions which you will be called upon to make as you meet your experiences of life. I know of no better standard to recommend for your acceptance than "The Sermon on the Mount" which we are now studying. In delivering this teaching, Jesus goes upon the mountain where the people gather near enough to hear. Here Jesus shows with what "sedateness and composure of mind the word of God should be spoken and heard."

Taking his place thus upon the mountain Jesus opened his mouth and taught that which, at first reading, appears to us impossible of attainment; but which after careful study we find to be the only thing that is possible to make of us what we ought to be. While I admit that the ideals of the "Sermon on the Mount," and especially those of the Beatitudes, are higher than we have attained, yet I do not say they are higher than we should attain, or the Lord expects us to attain. These ideals are practical, for he who gave them practiced them and presented to the world the most beautiful character the world has ever known.

A. **The Poor in Spirit.** Matthew 5:3. The word "blessed" as used by Jesus in the introduction of each of the beatitudes means far more than we usually mean by it. We can best illustrate it. We are out on the ocean in one of our large ships during the raging of a storm. The waves are rolling high and everything on the surface of the water is disturbed and even the vessel is rocking to and fro like a drunken man. But if we could go to the bottom of the ocean we would find perfect calmness—nothing is disturbed—nothing is being moved. That is the condition of the soul in the meaning of the word "blessed" as used by Jesus in the beatitudes. Those who are manifesting the seven characteristics given by our Lord will not be moved by the storms of life. Do not try to ride the waves of your sea of life during the raging of the storms, for it cannot be done. We can be like the objects at the bottom of the ocean by practicing the characteristics given here by Jesus. But let us notice our first one.

Jesus said "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The poor in spirit are those who recognize their utter dependence upon God. They are conscious that they are unable to walk their way alone. They need someone to guide them who knows the way and can understand the weakness of humanity. Jesus is just such a guide, and he is the only one who has traveled the way before us, and knows the difficulties which we shall face. He left us "an example that we should follow in his steps." We must "cast all our cares upon him for he careth for us." If we are "leaning on the

everlasting arms" as we "walk in this steps of Jesus," we shall be able to say that we are "standing on his promises"; and if we "labour on" till the close of the day, we shall "see our Saviour face to face." Thus depending upon him we shall "Look to the hills from whence cometh our help." Then taking God at his word and living as he directs in the Bible, we shall succeed in our efforts as a Christian. But any other procedure is a failure; for we have depended upon ourselves and not upon the Lord. He is our source of strength to meet life's realities. He promised Paul to give to him the necessary strength to meet his problem for which he prayed three times to have removed.

"It is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps" is the language of Jeremiah as he was guided by the Spirit of the Lord. He proved that in his history of the people of Israel and of Judah when he gave to the world the book of Kings. Here we find the people of God attempting to walk their way and to arrange their own affairs of life without God; but in the end they find themselves in bondage, with the northern kingdom never to return. Why cannot we learn our lesson from this history of Jeremiah, since Paul said those things were written for our learning? This and other stories were written by the Lord to keep future generations from attempting to leave God out of their lives. We should recognize this truth, for it is to the "poor in spirit" that the kingdom of heaven belongs; for "theirs is the kingdom of heaven," said Jesus.

B. They that Mourn. Matthew 5:4. "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." The mourners referred to here are those who mourn over their own sins; and in addition to this, they mourn over the sins of the world. But it is not enough for the Christian to mourn because of sin in his own life: he must mourn because of the condition of his own heart that caused him to sin. "Thy heart is not right" when you sin against God; and when you remain in that sinful condition and do not return to your first love, you are in a piteable condition—you are in danger of being lost.

How deep is the regret that we have for the condition of our hearts that cause us to sin? You who are neglecting your duty to your God, is your regret for this condition strong enough to cause you to come back home? If your mourning over your own sins is as it should be, you will come back home and make right your wrongs and start anew to the City of God. And if your mourning for sins in the lives of others is as it should be, it will cause you to give more of your time and money to save them. We look too lightly upon our own sins and think that we can get by the Lord. We need to recognize that nothing is farther from the truth. We need to mourn because of the condition of our hearts. "Godly sorrow leadeth thee to repentance," says the word of God, and if that sorrow is deep enough, it will cause

us to humble ourselves and make right our wrongs. We shall then be anxious to know what the Lord wants us to do, and we will be willing to do it with our might. When we recognize our shortcomings we shall then be willing to do something about them. We shall not ask the question, why it is necessary to do this, that, or the other thing. We shall be anxious to do what we can in order that we might be the means of saving others. We should not be satisfied just to save ourselves—that is not enough. We were saved to save others. There remains no comfort for us until we manifest that condition that causes us to mourn because of our weakness. We shall thus refrain from our criticism of others.

There are but three reasons why a person will dwell on the faults of others to the neglect of his own faults. These three reasons are:

1. The individual has never been made aware of his own sins—he has never realized his own mistakes and thinks he is above reproach and is thus justified in his criticism of those who do wrong.

2. He is aware of his own sins or shortcomings and desires to pull others down upon his own plane. This is a means of consoling himself that others are just as bad as he. This is a compensation.

3. He is aware of his own sins, and to divert the attention of others from his own mistakes, he will spend much of his time talking about the sins of others. Like the mother bird who flutters away from her nest to detract the attention of those who might injure her young, this person thinks that he has diverted the attention of others from his own sins. But he has utterly failed.

These are the only reasons one can have for spending much time talking about the mistakes of others to the neglect of his own sins. These people think that they have the real reasons covered up, but they are mistaken. They have not fooled either man or the Lord. We should be big enough to correct our own mistakes and make them right. We receive comfort in no other way.

C. Those who are meek. Matthew 5:5. "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." What a wonderful statement so full of meaning. The meek, the humble, the non-retaliating characters which are to inherit all things. Those people who when reviled, revile not again are the ones here referred to. They are the ones who do not seek to get even with those who do them an injury—those who do good for evil. When Jesus was reviled, he reviled not again, thus leaving an example that we should follow in his steps. Christians are commanded to return good for evil—kindness for unkindness, and to render to no man evil for evil. We are to do good unto those who despitefully use us. Jesus is our great example in these principles of meekness which include self-control. We must learn to control ourselves under all conditions of life. This is not an easy thing to do, and cannot be done without careful training.

God said "vengeance is mine, I will repay." But we are not satisfied to leave it with the Lord. We must be afraid that he will not do a good job of it. We fear that if we leave it to him he will prolong it until he has forgotten the evil the other fellow has done. Let us leave the matter with the Lord where it belongs. He knows far better than we what is the right thing to do in such matters. You and I do not have all of the evidence in the matter; then we are prejudiced about what would be the right thing to do for we are involved in it. "A soft answer turneth away wrath," is just as true now as it was when first uttered by the servant of the Lord. If this we shall try, we shall be manifesting the spirit of meekness.

D. Hungering and thirsting for righteousness. Matthew 5:6. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." In this, Jesus uses two words that express humanity's strongest physical desire—hunger and thirst. It is astonishing when we think what men and women will do to satisfy these two cravings of the flesh in comparison with what they do for the satisfaction of the longing of the soul. Man will spend all his time and money to satisfy the desire of the flesh; but how much time and money will he spend for the longing of the soul which nothing temporal can satisfy? There is more money spent in the United States for chewing gum and tobacco alone than for the salvation of the souls of men and women. Even some church members will spend more foolishly than they will give in their contribution on the Lord's Day. How many of our children will give as much in the contribution as they do for the picture shows or cold drinks? I have used these two illustrations to get us to see where our hunger and thirst are—where we are setting our affections. This hunger and thirst are not strong enough in any of us as concerns our soul. If you had no appetite for physical food, what would you do? You would not ignore this as often as you do in regard to your soul. You would be alarmed about the condition and would do something about it. But many times our hunger and thirst for spiritual things can lie dormant indefinitely without any alarm on our part. We should cultivate a hunger for the bread of life. But we labor for the bread that perisheth, and neglect to obtain the bread of life that will satisfy here and after here. Your attendance at the house of worship may determine your hunger and thirst for righteousness.

E. The Merciful. Matthew 5:7. "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." We boast at times about the fact that we have dealt justly with all men. It is not enough to give justice, we must do more than that; we should show mercy. It is mercy that God wants at our hands toward our fellow man. A colored man was brought into court one morning in a very nervous condition, but was informed by the Judge that he need not worry, for he would see

that he would receive justice in his court; but the old darkey replied that it was not justice that he wanted; but mercy. So it is with us before God: it is not justice that we want, but mercy that we desire at the hands of the Almighty. But He tells us that if we expect mercy from Him we must show mercy unto others. We know not how soon we shall be called to stand before the Judge of all the earth; therefore, we should show mercy to all men as we are given the opportunity. We need not expect to receive that from the hands of our Lord which we are not willing to show unto others.

F. Purity of Heart. Matthew 5:8. "Blessed are the pure in heart" is the most comprehensive statement of the beatitudes. Christianity calls for purity within. We must not only present unto God clean hands, but must also present unto Him a pure heart. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he"; for "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." It is true that we cannot keep impure thoughts out of our hearts at all times. Neither can we "keep the birds from flying over our heads; but we can keep them from building their nests in our hair." May I illustrate the purity of the heart by comparing it to the secret chamber in which we hold conversation with our thoughts. The doors of this room are closed against both our friends and our enemies. The guests are the thoughts of our hearts. Many of these guests will enter unbidden and unwelcome. The thing for us to do is to never give those evil guests a comfortable chair and let them stay. Here is our trouble. We will open the door for them, give them a comfortable chair and entertain them just as long as they want to stay, and give them an invitation to return when they leave. We should send them out the back door as fast as they enter the front door: never welcoming them for one moment. We should be kept busy entertaining pure thoughts, honest things, good things, true things, and things of good report so as to form a character pleasing unto God. You cannot meditate upon anything very long without that thing becoming a part of you; for you build your character out of your thoughts which are furnished as the raw material. May we keep our hearts pure, for out of them are the issues of life.

G. The Peacemakers. Matthew 5:9. "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." The Christian is to be pure toward God, and peaceable toward man: yet he is to be at peace with God, for without that peace that passeth understanding no man can stand in the presence of the Almighty. So it is the person who makes peace with both God and man that is called "blessed" by the Son of God. But you may not be able to make peace with man because he is not willing to make peace with God. In that case you are to make peace with God whether or not you are able to make peace with man. But be sure that you have done what you can to make peace with your fellowman. You should be sure that in case

you fail that it is not your fault. All must live in peace with God even though we are not able to make peace with some men. We make peace with God by being reconciled unto Him. Paul declares that the words of reconciliation had been given into the hands of the apostles for he said: "the words of reconciliation hath been given into our hands. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled unto God." II Corinthians 5:18-20. Jesus declared unto the Father that he had given unto the apostles the words that the Father had given unto him. John 17:8. Thus, through obedience to the commands given by Christ through the apostles who were guided by the Holy Spirit, we are to make peace with God. This was all made possible by the cross of Christ. Since reconciliation takes place in Christ, it results that only those in Him have made peace with God. But I should like for you to notice the words of Paul in Colossians 1:21,22. "And you, that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprougeable in his sight." And again from Ephesians 2:16: "And that he might reconcile both (Jews and Gentiles) unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." Here we have reconciliation made possible through the death of the physical body of Jesus and our entrance into the one body, the church. In Romans 6:3-5, Paul says: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Thus, from the teaching of the New Testament we learn that man is to make peace with God through his obedience to the gospel.

H. The Patient Sufferers. Matthew 5:10-12. "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." Thus, Jesus closes this list of beatitudes by teaching concerning the persecution of the saints. The people who have proved to be the greatest servants in the world have had to endure the greatest sufferings. As was Jesus, so have been his disciples—despised and rejected of men. They were driven from their homes; they were saturated with oil, set fire to and were burned—furnishing light to Nero's gardens while he reveled in sin; they were cast into prison and fought with wild beasts, yet without murmuring or complaining, counting it an honor to suffer for the Christ. Matthew Henry declares in his commentary "That there is no evil so black or horrid, which, at one time or other, has not been said, falsely, of Christ and his disciples." Vol. V, page 52. They were not to suffer as evil doers, neither as busy bodies in other men's

matters; but if they suffered as a Christian, they were to consider that a happy privilege; for "so persecuted they the prophets which were before them." I Peter 4:15. They were not only patient and meek in these persecutions, they rejoiced in them. They were not willing that Jesus should suffer alone; but they were willing to suffer with him that they might enjoy the blessings with him in eternity.

Christians must be poor in spirit—recognizing their utter dependence upon God; they must mourn for their own sins until it brings them to repentance, and over the sins of others until they are willing to sacrifice to save them; they must hunger and thirst after righteousness to such an extent that they will eat of the bread of life; they must not be satisfied with justice alone, but must show mercy unto all; they must be pure in heart, for out of it are the issues of life; they must endure hardship and suffering as a true soldier of Christ when they have made peace with God. Herein lies the test of Christian character. These are the characteristics to be manifested by the citizens of the kingdom of heaven. Herein lies true happiness, and in these alone can the soul find true contentment and satisfaction.

IV. CHRISTIAN INFLUENCE, Matthew 5:13-16.

Having studied the Christian Characteristics as they are revealed in the Beatitudes, we shall now notice the Influence which Jesus says that the citizens of the Kingdom are to have with those with whom they come in contact.

"Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candle-stick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matthew 5:13-16.

Jesus has called his disciples and told them he would make them to become fishers of men. He has told them what they are to be within: here he tells them further what he has designed them to be—"the salt of the earth; the light of the world." Not only the few disciples present, but also all his disciples who manifest the characteristics of the Beatitudes are "to be the salt of the earth; the light of the world." No one can become outwardly to the world as either salt or light until that person has become within the character of the Beatitudes; for the condition mentioned by Jesus is the natural result of the character mentioned by him in the Beatitudes of the first part of this "Teaching on the Hill."

A. **Christians are to be the Salt of the Earth.** Matthew 5:13. "Ye are the salt of the earth," said Jesus as he unfolds unto his disciples what they are to be to the world. There are several qualities

of salt as it is used to represent the influence of Christians as they follow the teaching of Jesus.

1. Salt is used as a preserving element. Jesus has said to his disciples: "Ye are the preservers of the world." What a responsibility the Lord has given to this small group of disciples whom he is preparing to save the world! When he gave this statement, Jesus knew that he was not going to remain upon earth long enough to give his message to all the world—to reveal God's Eternal Purpose unto men; so he has selected these disciples whom he is training, after which he is to send the Holy Spirit to guide them in the proclamation of the gospel.

While God put his words in the mouth of Jesus, he in turn said: "Father, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. . . . And I have given unto them the words which thou gavest unto me, and they have received them." John 17:4-8. They became the "preservers" of the world in the sense they were instrumental in revealing to men the law of God as they had intrusted into their hands the "words of reconciliation." 2 Corinthians 5:19. In every case of conversion in the New Testament, we find the "words of salvation" in the hands of inspired men. No one ever learned of the plan of salvation as it is found in the gospel independent of one or more of the inspired teachers selected by Jesus. God, Jesus Christ, the angels, or the Holy Spirit never did tell anyone what to do to be saved independent of these men. God, through Christ, selected his disciples and gave to them the Holy Spirit to make known to man the plan of salvation. Jesus prepared these disciples to take up the work of making known the will of God to man; and, even after his resurrection, he told them to tarry in Jerusalem until they had received the Spirit of God that was to guide them into all truth. John 14 and 16. Thus, these men became the means of making known the gospel which is God's power unto salvation for all men. It is through the teaching of these inspired human messengers that the world today is to learn of the Christ and the terms of pardon found in the gospel. The New Testament contains that revelation which we must study today. Paul declared that God, "hath committed unto us the words of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled unto God." See 2 Corinthians 5:19-20. To Timothy, Paul said: "the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." 2 Timothy 2:2. This shows that others beside the inspired men were to teach the gospel as they learned it. Timothy was not one of these inspired teachers, for he was told to "study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed; handling aright the word of truth."

After the stoning of Stephen, the early church was so persecuted that the disciples "went everywhere teaching the word." Philip goes as far as Samaria and preaches Christ unto those people. Jesus, in person, did not teach all the people. He taught only the Jews; and, when he sent out the twelve and the seventy during his personal ministry, he told them not to go into the way of the Gentiles nor to enter into any city of the Samaritans; but to go rather to those that were of the lost of Israel. In the letter written to the Hebrew Christians, we read: "for when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk and not of strong meat." Hebrews 5:12.

2. Salt is used for flavor. A king, after asking several of his daughters how much they loved him, received the following answer from his youngest daughter: "Daddy, I love you like salt." The king was very much displeased with this remark; but, at breakfast next morning, he complained of the food not being as good as it had been and asked his youngest daughter what the cause was. She answered: "It has no salt in it." He then thanked her for her compliment the evening before; for he now realized that she meant that her life would be as worthless without him as food without salt. Thus, Christians are to furnish flavor for the lives of others. I am wondering just what kind of flavor we furnish to the world. The saints of the Lord are to make life worth living for others; if we do not, we have lost our flavor and are of no value unto our Lord.

3. Salt works silently as it creates thirst. As salt is one of man's greatest creators of thirst, so the Christian should be one of the world's greatest creators of the thirst for the water of life. This we may do silently; but too many times we want to make a show of what we are doing. We fear that we will not get the personal praise or honor that we think we should receive; and if no one is to know what we do, we are not so anxious about it. But he who is living by the ideals of Jesus and thus manifesting the characteristics of the Beatitudes, his life will be a silent influence in the world for good—he will flavor the lives of others. He will be known and read of a'l men. He will be as silent in his influence of saving the world as salt in its work—he will be a flavor that is missed when he is absent.

But salt that has lost its saltiness cannot be salted again. Christians that have lost their influence for good may find it difficult, if not impossible, to regain that influence. How important it is therefore for us to live right—what a blight sin may have on our lives. No wonder the Lord admonishes us to "shun the very appearance of evil." We may pray: "Pass me not, Oh gentle Saviour," but he has already passed us by when we, like salt, have lost our saltiness.

B. Christians are to be the Light of the World. "Ye are the

light of the world." Matthew 5:14. As Jesus warned in the preceding section against becoming insipid; so here, he warns against the dangers of letting our light become obscure. The purpose of a light is to shine; and so the purpose of Christianity in our lives is to so shine in the world that it may expell the darkness of sin and ignorance. We must walk in the light as he is in the light in order that we may have fellowship with him. We as Christians have been redeemed to shine. It is the nature of light to shine; and the nature of this light is the life that Jesus desires us to live. John says: "In him was life, and that life is the light of men." It is the life that we are to live as Christians that is to be the light of the world. What poor light the world sometimes has! This life is to shine before men in order that they may glorify God and not the individual. The glory of God should be the one supreme thing for which all should live. Peter says: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever." 1 Peter 4:11. We are not to be satisfied with glorifying God ourselves; but we are to so live that the influence of our lives will cause others to glorify God. By our godly conversation and good works, we not only glorify God, we also inspire in others a desire to follow our example. "Actions speak louder than words."

In letting our light shine before men, we must continue to live with that same enthusiasm and interest that we had when we accepted Christ as the only leader and lawgiver that God has for man today: we must continue to obey him as we did when we first obeyed the gospel. We must be "rooted and built up in him." We must not only have our foundation fixed in Christ, we also must do all of our building upon this sure foundation. "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in his excellent word. What more can he say than to you he has said, you who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?" With Christ as our foundation upon which to build the character for which he calls in the beginning of the "Sermon on the Mount," we are able then to "Let the lower lights be burning," and can "send the gleam across the wave"; for "some poor fainting, struggling seaman you may rescue, you may save." There are "eager eyes watching, longing, for the lights along the shore," and these may never see a gleam of light from the haven of rest save as they see the light of the soul as it is shining through you in your daily conduct among the children of earth as you attempt to live the kind of life Jesus has taught us to live.

Jesus said that, when others see our good works, they will glorify God. These works are those deeds of service which we render while working in the vineyard of the Lord. The following are re-

vealed in the gospel: "Live unto God." "Yield yourselves unto God as those alive from the dead." "Be spiritually minded," for "It is life." "Present your bodies a living sacrifice unto God." "Be transformed by the renewing of your minds." "Think soberly." "Cleave to the good." "Be kindly affectioned one to another." "Fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." "Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer." "Given to hospitality." "Bless them that persecute you." "Rejoice with them that rejoice, weep with them that weep." "Be of the same mind one toward another." "Provide things honest in the sight of all men." "If thine enemies hunger, feed them: if they thirst, give them drink."

V. JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY CONTRASTED, Matt. 5:17-48.

In this section we shall study the contrast between the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth and that of the religious leaders among the Jews in Palestine.

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 5:17-20.

When Jesus uttered this statement, he had been teaching for some time; most of which perhaps had been among the people of Judea. Matthew omits that part of his teaching and begins his story with Jesus' teaching in Galilee. In Matthew 4:23, we are told that "Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom." The nature of this teaching was such that caused many of the Jews to think that he was going to "destroy the law," for he taught not the law of Moses, nor their traditions; but his teaching was so different from what they thought should be given according to their interpretations of the law, and the prophets, that their conclusion was that Jesus was to destroy the law. If the message of Jesus was not different from their interpretation of the law, or the prophets; yea, and different from the law and the prophets, why did they think that he came to destroy them? Jesus informs them that he did not come to destroy; but that he came to fulfil, and that none of the law or the prophets was to pass away until all be fulfilled.

Some religious teachers have taken this saying of Jesus that he came not to destroy the law or the prophets to mean that they were never to be abrogated or brought to an end; but that they shall be

binding until the end of time. A careful study of the word of the Lord will show that this conclusion is wrong. It is true that Jesus came not to destroy the law, or the prophets; but he did come to fulfill them. To fulfill them does not mean that they are to last until the end of time and that they are still binding upon men and women.

But what did Jesus mean by the expression: "I came not to destroy, but to fulfill?" May we illustrate it. Two men form, or enter into, a contract. They are under obligation to fulfill that contract and accomplish all that this contract calls for; but they are not to destroy it. When this contract is fulfilled, it is no longer binding on any one. It has served its purpose for which it was formed and automatically becomes void. But if the contract is destroyed it does not accomplish the purpose for which it was made. So it is with the law and the prophets. Jesus came to fulfill them—to accomplish the things for which they were given—and not to destroy them. By the fulfillment of the law and the prophets by Jesus, the purpose of Jehovah was realized; and, when this purpose has been realized, there is no need of the law or the prophets being in force. Hence they came to an end when Jesus fulfilled them, nailing them to the cross.

The following is from George Baker Stevens, Professor of Systematic Theology in Yale University, in his book, "The Theology of the New Testament," page 19:

"This passage must be read in the light of the explanations and applications which follow it. Jesus proceeds to say that not a jot or tittle shall pass away from the law,—a statement which, if read by itself, would seem to indicate the perpetual validity of the whole Old Testament system, ritual, sacrifices, and all. But to the statement in question he immediately adds: 'till all things be fulfilled, or accomplished.' He does not, therefore, say that no part of this system shall ever pass away (as it has done, and that, too, in consequences of his own teaching), but only that no part of it shall escape the process of fulfillment; that it shall not pass away till, having served its providential purpose, it is fulfilled in the gospel."

This writer then continues to state that Jesus fulfilled the law and the prophets in his own personal life and that to correctly understand this fulfillment one must make a careful study of all of the New Testament. Jesus was the perfect righteousness which the law demanded thus fulfilling the requirements of the law in personal life. Jesus also fulfilled the law in that he revealed unto the world the true system of religion which is foretold by the law and the prophets. The Master further shows by his life and teaching that the source of both good and evil in the life of an individual is produced in the heart and that our thoughts are the raw materials from which character is made. In doing this, Jesus shows the contrast between Judaism and Christianity. Thus, he shows the true meaning of the law and the

prophets rather than the superficial meaning given them by the religious leaders of the Jews.

The law, although given by God through Moses and therefore divine, was a temporary covenant designed to serve only as an attendant along the way for the purpose of bringing the Jews unto the Christ, or Messiah. When this attendant has led them to their Christ they are no longer under the attendant; for they are to be under the Christ who is the fulfilment of the Eternal Purpose of God in the salvation of man from the effects of evil in his life. Through all the Old Testament story we see the unfolding of the promise of God that in some future time through the redemption of the blood of the Christ man is to have the opportunity of returning to that covenant relationship with his maker which was enjoyed at the beginning. This providential grace was seen in operation in the days of Abraham as it is revealed in the statement made by Paul in Galatians 3:8: "The scriptures, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." This is a quotation from Genesis 12:3. Again Paul said: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made; He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to they seed, which is Christ." Galatians 3:16. Thus, the original covenant of God was that through Jesus the Christ man should finally be redeemed through the ransom price of the blood of the Christ which was shed upon the cross for the whole world. The law, which was long after the promise, could not disannul or make the promise of none effect; for the inheritance is not of the law, but of the gospel of Jesus the Christ.

In Romans 4:13,14, we read: "The promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise is made of none effect." This clearly shows that God made a promise to Abraham that through him and his seed, which Paul declares is Christ, all nations of the earth were to be blessed. It further shows that this blessing was not to be realized through the law given through Moses; neither shall those who are fleshly heirs of Abraham through the laws be heirs of the promise that Jehovah made to him, but the seed of Abraham through the Christ. Galatians 3:29.

But why then was the law given? Paul declares that "it was added because of transgression, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." Galatians 3:19. He also says that the law was the tutor for the purpose of bringing the Jews to Christ. After the Christ has come the Jews are no longer under this tutor. The mission of the tutor was to lead the children to the teacher; but after they had been delivered unto the teacher they were no longer under

the tutor. Since the law was for the purpose of leading the Jews unto the Christ, they are no longer under the law after the Christ has come. This law then was to last only until the coming of the Christ who was to fulfil the law or the covenant which Jehovah had made with those people. This he does by living the perfect life which the law demanded, and revealing the perfect system of religion which it predicted. Having therefore fulfilled the law and the prophets they have passed away and are no longer the law to govern humanity to-day.

All that the prophets said concerning the Messiah was fulfilled in the life and teaching of Jesus of Nazareth. Therefore Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah about whom the prophets had foretold. There is not a prediction to be found in all their writings that we do not find fulfilled in the Christ of the New Testament. Jesus said no part of the law and the prophets was to pass away until all had been fulfilled. But the New Testament teaches that they have passed away. We must therefore conclude that all that was said in the law and the prophets concerning the Christ was fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth.

Thus, these verses which we have studied reveal that Jesus was not patching up the law and the prophets in his efforts to make known the foundation principles of the gospel, but he was fulfilling the law as he was giving to the world a new law—one that would accomplish the Eternal Purpose of God. The Law of Moses was given to the Jews and intended to last only for a time; at which time, it would be replaced by a new law which was to be given to all the world. In the meantime no part was to pass away until all was fulfilled. That having been done, the law was to give place to that which God had in mind in the beginning.

The Bible begins with the story of man in the garden of Eden with access to the tree of life. It closes with the promise of man's return to that same tree of life in the Paradise of God. Everything between these two thoughts in the Bible has to do with the gradual unfolding of God's Eternal Purpose. From the beginning God had in mind the salvation of man through the ransom price of the blood of Jesus, and we read through the Bible the story of the unfolding of this purpose in His dealings with men in their disobedience as well as their obedience as Jehovah prepares the human race for the coming of the Christ to redeem man. God chooses one particular family—the family of Abraham, and from that family He prepares a nation whose purpose is to introduce the Christ into the world. This law of Moses was given to them in order to fulfill the purpose and plan of the Almighty. Jesus having fulfilled this law it is therefore no longer binding unto those to whom it was given. With the passing of the law to govern the lives of men and women the ten commandments pass with it. In the gospel we have many of the principles of the law

of Moses included and are to be observed not because they are in the law but in the gospel of the Christ.

To his disciples just before he made his final ascension, Jesus said: "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me." Luke 24:44. Thus having fulfilled all that was foretold in the Old Testament concerning him, Jesus has fulfilled the law and the prophets, and the world today is under the "New Covenant" promised by Jeremiah in which he said:

"Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: but this shall be the covenant that I shall make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and ever man his brother, saying, know the Lord; for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Jeremiah 31:31-34.

This prophecy is quoted by Paul in Hebrews 8:8-12, and he here declares that the gospel of Jesus the Christ is that "New Covenant" referred to by Jeremiah. No wonder Jesus said no part of the law and the prophets was to pass away until all be fulfilled. They were to be fulfilled in the gospel which was to be for all the world in order to justification. Paul, by the Holy Spirit, therefore said, "The Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation." Romans 1:16.

We are not under the law of Moses now, but under the gospel of the Christ; and under it we are to worship the Lord in order that our righteousness may exceed the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees. When we understand the relationship between the Law and the Gospel we will have a greater esteem for the New Testament and a greater love for the Christ, for He has fulfilled the law and the prophets.

A. A Contrast in Personal Relationships. In Matthew 5:21-32, Jesus quotes two commandments of the law in his contrast with the teaching of the Jews in personal relationships, and shows that his teaching is directed at the heart of the individual as the foundation of all conduct. From these two commandments, Jesus sums up all his teaching on personal relationships. These two are:

1. The sacredness of life. "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be

in danger of the judgment: but I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother (without cause), shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou are in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." Matthew 5:21-26.

This plainly teaches that we are not to interfere with or destroy human life, because it came from God and is sacred. The law had to do merely with the outward act, but Jesus declares there is more to it than that. He mentions three conditions in these verses which we have just quoted which should be given serious consideration by all the disciples of our Lord. Jesus said: "Whosoever is angry with his brother, is in danger of the judgment." The judgment here referred to is not the actual Jewish judgment of smaller courts which deal with minor matters; but the tribunal of the criminal is here in the mind of our Lord. Anger in the heart of man creates the condition of the criminal, and if permitted to have its effect murder will be the result. The statement "without cause" is omitted by those who have given to us the Revised Version. Perhaps we should like for this condition to be in the reading, but in the original it is not to be found. We think that we can find grounds for our anger against others, but our Lord said that there is none. Jesus was speaking of anger under all conditions of life; for the term "brother" as used by him does not have reference to blood relationship, but to common humanity. Thus Jesus has said that if we are angry in our hearts toward any one, we are not necessarily to appear for judgment; but we are in danger of it, and in the path of peril that leads there. All anger is to be kept out of our hearts. The Christian is never justified in being angry with any one, for that is a disposition of heart too unlike our Lord.

"Whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council." This is a higher court; because the sin is greater, and is deserving of greater condemnation. That is, it is a stronger term, and suggests a deeper displeasure toward our fellow man. It means contempt for another, and may lead to the use of bitter words against the intelligence of the individual. This puts one in greater danger than just the condition of anger mentioned in the preceding statement; it is an insult to one's intelligence.

"But whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be in danger of hell

fire." This is a term of insult or reviling against another. Doing this, one is in danger of being cast out of the kingdom, being fit only for the rubbish heap. In all three of these, Jesus does not mention murder. He does not need to. No murder is committed in either case; but that, back of the act, there was in the heart insult, contempt, and anger. If we are never angry toward our fellow man, we will never be guilty of murder. Life is to be so sacred to us that there will never be harbored in our hearts insult, contempt, or anger; which, if cultivated, will result in taking one's life. Jesus goes to the cause. But he adds another statement; that if you come before God to worship, and you remember that you have been angry with your fellow man, and have despised him in contempt, and have hurt him by insult; you are to leave your gift, and go and be reconciled to your brother, and then offer your gift. If we have done these things to our fellow man, and have not made them right; the adversary has claim upon us to bring us into judgment. Make it right, and free thyself from this danger, is the plea of Jesus in these verses. This teaching will cause many of us to be more careful of our feelings as well as our actions toward others. "Keep thy heart pure, for out of it are the issues of life."

2. The sacredness of the family. "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old, thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not thy whole body should be cast into hell. It hath been said, whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: but I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery." Matthew 5:27-32.

In his teaching of the sacredness of the family, Jesus calls attention to the inward desire of which adultery is the fruit. It has been suggested that the word "look" in this connection is not the casual look, but the persistent, cherished longing of the heart. The Master calls attention to the importance of self-control, and the necessity of ridding ourselves of all that interferes with our Christian lives; even though we are called upon to deprive ourselves of those things which appear to be as dear to us as our eye, or our right hand. This language is not to be taken literally, but to illustrate the sacrifice that is to be made in living the Christian life—the price we are to pay for our Christianity. In considering this price to be paid for Christianity,

the Christian often overlooks the price that must be paid for the pleasures of the world. In our Christianity we pay the price before the enjoyment: in the pleasures of the world we have the enjoyment, and pay the price later—but pay the price we must in all of it.

Continuing his teaching of the sacredness of the family, Jesus says that a man is not to put away his wife save for the cause of fornication. This applies to the wife the same as it does to the husband. If a companion is put away for any other cause than that of fornication, Jesus says that the one put away is caused to commit adultery by the other companion; and the one that marries the one put away commits adultery. In the case of separation on the grounds of fornication, the guilty one is not free to marry again without violation of God's law. There is an implied conclusion that the innocent person would be free to marry again; but this is only an implied conclusion, and not a definite assertion. This same implied conclusion is found in Matthew 19:3-12; but it is not found in the teaching of Jesus in Mark 10:2-12, and Luke 16:16-18. If the implied conclusion of Matthew is strong enough to stand accepted of the Lord in the face of others in which the implied conclusion is not found, the innocent party of the separation on the grounds of adultery may be free to marry again. If separation occurs on any other ground than adultery, even the innocent party is not permitted to re-marry; and never the guilty party is permitted to remarry after the separation.

Separation should be the last resort, and then it should be entered with sadness, and admission of failure. Jesus taught that marriage is sacred, and should be entered with the idea on the part of both individuals that they are to live together until death. Therefore, the fundamental principle of the teaching of Jesus in regard to marriage is that it is a union of two individuals for life. This makes marriage a sacred institution, and should be so regarded by all. Since marriage was ordained of God in the beginning for the complement of man, and for the reproduction of the human race, it should not be trifled with by man. It is God's institution, and is governed by His laws.

Regardless of the wishes of the human race, man cannot legislate to the destruction of that which has been ordained of God and is to be governed by His law. Since marriage was ordained of God, and is to be governed by his law, there should be much teaching on the part of the home and church in order that individuals may be prepared for the most important of all human relationships. There is no other relationship that calls for so much adjustment on the part of all concerned, and in none other is one required to so completely empty himself in the interest of another. For those who enter this relationship, it is the beginning of their life anew as they remold their life into that of their companion.

B. A Contrast in Social Relationships. Matthew 5:33-42. Here we have a contrast in Truth and Justice between the teaching of Jesus and the religious leaders of the land of Palestine. The Jews had added their traditions to the Law of Moses until their teaching was not that which the prophets had foretold. In order to correct this, Jesus is now showing what the prophets had in mind as they predicted the fulfillment of the Eternal Purpose of the Lord.

1. Concerning Truth. "Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, thou shalt not foreswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: but I say unto you, swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." Matthew 5:33-37. Jesus here declares that oaths of any kind are not necessary in his kingdom. Christians can be depended upon to do what they say—to keep their promises—or at least make it satisfactory to the one to whom the promise is made. The disciples of the Christ are to be individuals of their word—individuals upon whom you can depend. Their word is to be as good as their bond. The Christian will attempt to speak the truth, and when his word has gone out, he will do all in his power to make it good.

If you cannot depend upon what a man tells you—that is, if you cannot trust him—you may rest assured that he is not the kind of Christian the Bible talks about; he is not what he should be. He who will not fulfill his contracts without being bound by oath does not keep or fulfill them because he is a Christian, but because the law forces him to. The Christian must remember that he is in the presence of the Almighty at all times; and that, since even the hairs of his head are numbered, his actions do not go unnoticed. The Lord knows whether or not his people are truthful to their obligations.

2. Concerning Justice. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." Matthew 5:38-42.

Here we have a contrast of the teaching of Jesus and that of the Jewish leaders on social relationships concerning justice. If one does a Christian an injury, the Christian will see that a similar injury is not done to that individual in revenge. This was permitted under the law. Not that the person who had been injured could inflict the in-

jury in return, but he could see that a similar injury was inflicted upon his enemy. This, the Christian cannot do. Instead, he is to do good even unto his enemies; yea, he is to love his enemies rather than hate them. The Christian is not to return evil for evil; and when he is reviled he is not to revile again. He will resist not evil in personal matters, but will do good unto all men, even unto his enemies. If his enemy hungers, the Christian is to feed him; if he is thirsty, he is to give him drink. By thus doing he may be able to lead him to the Christ for salvation. He is thus letting his light shine before men that they seeing his good works may glorify the Father in heaven. This may not be an easy thing to do, but the Lord has not outlined an easy course for his disciples.

C. Foundation Principle of all Relationships. Matthew 5:43-48. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

To do good only to those who do good to us is no better than is seen by the world around us. To love only those who love us is of no special credit. Even sinners do that much. There is no reward in actions of this kind beyond the reward that men can give. Citizens of the kingdom of heaven are to love both their friends and their enemies. If we love our enemies as well as our friends, we will never be angry with them; we will never say Raca to them—never have contempt for them—never call one of them a fool. By this, we shall be able to show to the world what Christianity has done to us and for us, thus we shall present to them the influence of Christianity. If we have the love that we should, there will never be a break in the marriage relationship. Because if love does not reign in the home the family circle is often broken.

In manifesting this foundation principle of all relationships, Jesus calls upon his disciples to love their enemies. In doing this, Christians are to do three things for those who may be their enemies.

1. Speak well of them—"bless them that curse you." This is not always an easy thing to do, but it is one of the requirements of our Lord if we would be like him. We are to see the good in all men, even in those who may hate us, or even curse us. This good we should commend, both to them and about them. We should speak

well of them for the good they do, even in their absence. This does not mean that Christians are to indorse the evils of men, neither does it mean that commendation is to be given to those who deserve punishment for their evil deeds. But those people who may curse us are to be commended for the good they do. Usually when others hate us we are never able to see the good that is in them—we see only evil in all that they do. Jesus says that this is not right. "Bless them that curse you," said Jesus.

2. Do good to them—"do good to them that hate you." This is better than commending the good that they do. In doing good to those who do evil to us, we are in this reaction showing the disposition of our Lord. We are walking in the steps of Jesus who did no wrong. If a man does us an injury, we are to seek an opportunity to do good unto him rather than make his pathway harder—remove some stone from his way rather than add another in the path. This we cannot do if we harbor evil and envy in our hearts. In order that all bitterness may be removed from our hearts, our Lord has asked us to do good unto those who hate us. We cannot hold revenge in our hearts toward others while we are doing good to them. Christians are to do good to all men, especially unto those who are of the household of faith. We are never permitted to do evil unto anyone.

3. Pray for them—"pray for them which despitefully use you." We cannot pray for others and at the same time hate them. Jesus prayed for those who drove the nails through his hands and feet—"Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." We should pray for our enemies. But to do this, there must not be any bitterness in our hearts. That is the very thing our Lord is striving for in his disciples—that all bitterness may be removed from their hearts. Christians should pray for all men.

Jesus not only shows the contrast between his teaching and that of the Jewish leaders of his time, he also points his disciples to the best that is in men. He gives three reasons for asking his disciples to love their enemies.

First, love your enemies that you may be the children of your Father which is in heaven. See verse 45. We must therefore conclude that the children of God are not acceptable unto their Lord unless they love their enemies. What a requirement Jesus here places upon the children of God! To be children of God, we must love our enemies. How many of us meet this requirement? How far short of this many of us come! This is one of the requirements of our Lord in his disciples—we must love our enemies in order to be children of our Father which is in heaven. No wonder Jesus said his disciples are the light of the world. What light such characters furnish!

Second, that you may do more than others. There are plenty of people who make no pretensions to Christianity that love their friends,

and hate their enemies. But the disciples of the Christ are to do more than this—they are to love their enemies. The saints of the Lord are to show to the world that they have something that the world cannot give, thus letting their light shine before men that through this light others may be led to the Christ. What examples we should be!

Third, that you may be perfect as your Father in heaven. Perfect in the sense that you love your enemies—you will speak well of them, you will do them good, and you will pray for them. You will thus be like your Lord who prayed, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."

This teaching of Jesus is to correct the heart, and thus make the life pure, in order that it may be the salt of the earth, and the light of the world. This teaching is not just for local application, but these are eternal principles—principles which are to be manifested by the disciples of the Christ for all time to come.

This foundation principle of love is discussed by Paul in I Corinthians 13:1-13, in which he compares love to man's greatest accomplishment; he analyzes it by showing what it is, and then defends it against all things else.

VI. THE WARNINGS OF JESUS. Matthew 6:1-34.

Jesus here presents a series of warnings which should be heeded by the citizens of the kingdom through all ages. These are the warnings which the gospel is constantly urging upon the saints of the Lord. In this sermon on the mount we have the foundation for the teaching against false conceptions of life—false conceptions which are too often found in the lives of the saints. There are three of these warnings.

A. Warnings against hypocrisy. Matthew 6:1-18. Here Jesus is warning his disciples against deeds of service which are rendered for the purpose of show before men that they may receive the praise of men. This is not a contradiction of the statement of Jesus in which he said, "Let your light shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." He is here stating that the citizens of his kingdom are not to do their deeds of service for worldly honor or to receive the praise of men. When a person manifests the characteristics of the Beatitudes his life will shine in the world, and it will cast an irresistible influence for good. Jesus is denouncing the motive rather than the action. He here mentions three specific services that are often rendered for the purpose of receiving the praise of men.

1. **Almsgiving.** Matthew 6:2-4. Jesus said, "Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward." This

is a picture of what actually occurred in the days of Jesus. Religious people made special effort to let others know of their deeds of service to humanity. This they did for the purpose of receiving the praise that men might give to them. Jesus teaches that the all important motive in our service should be to please the Lord. Those mentioned by Jesus have rendered their service to be seen of men; they have their reward—the praise of men. Jesus warns his disciples against this temptation. The saints of the Lord are not to broadcast their deeds of service to the world for the purpose of receiving the praise of men; the world will learn of the work of the people of God when that work is done in keeping with the motive here outlined by Jesus. The world knows more about the actions of the people of God than they are given credit for. They know the lives of the saints, and it is foolish to attempt to make the world think that the church is important when Christianity is not important in the lives of those who compose its membership. To “proclaim freewill offerings, and to publish them” is not righteousness toward God. A great many religious leaders are constantly talking about what they have done and what they are doing. This may be the only evidence that the world has that the church is doing the things it is talking about. The people of God should show their interest in the word of the Lord by doing what Jesus has required of them:

Jesus declares in this connection that his disciples are not to let their left hand know what the right hand has done. This is not to have a literal application, but their service is to be done to the honor of God and not to men. In reality, this is a service to God. Too much of our almsgiving is prompted from necessity. Paul declared unto the saints in Corinth that their contribution was not to be made from necessity, but from the standpoint of duty or worship. 2 Corinthians 9:7. This is to be given willingly, not grudgingly. Christians are to give because it is their duty to give—they cannot be Christians and not give of their means as the Lord has prospered them. But when our giving is on the plane of necessity, and we broadcast it that the world may see what we have done, we have our reward, for we have realized the purpose of our giving. The goal has been reached and we have no reward from our Lord—it was not done as service to Him, but as service to men.

Thus Jesus declares that our almsgiving is to be prompted from the motive of service to God, and not a service to be seen of men and praised by men. Let the service itself tell for itself, and we shall by that method let the light of our actions shine before the world for their good. Thus, by doing this, our lives will induce them to want to become Christians.

2. Prayer. Matthew 6:5-15. In this section Jesus continues his teaching concerning the fact that Christian service must be given un-

to God and not rendered before men to be seen of them. In his discussion of prayer, Jesus furnishes an illustration of what he means. This he gives in what has been called the "Lord's Prayer," but which in reality is the model which the Lord gave to his disciples for the purpose of teaching them how they were to pray. We have no record where any of his disciples ever prayed as here Jesus outlines it—that they never used this prayer as Jesus gave it to them. In this model here given by Jesus you will find five major points that would be well for the saints of the Lord to follow today. These five points are: Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Intercession, and Petition. After we approach our God in Adoration, we are made to think of our weakness and confess to Him our sins and ask for forgiveness. We then express to Him our thanks for all that He has done for us, and intercede in behalf of others, even our enemies. Then, finally, we may ask Him for the things which we feel that we need. If these five major points we keep in mind our prayers will be easier; and some of them might not be so long. It is not the length of the prayer that counts with the Lord; it is the condition of the heart that is offering that prayer, for "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination." Proverbs 28:9. To attempt to pray unto God when we have refused to obey His law is an abomination unto Him. So it is the condition of the heart that utters the prayer that is more important than the length of the prayer. We should study this model given by Jesus in order that we may learn how to pray as we ought—a prayer that the Lord will accept.

It has been suggested that this model prayer which Jesus gave to his disciples has two major divisions; the first part has to do with God's kingdom, and the second part deals with man's needs. Probably no more was ever uttered in so few words. It is not the wording of man, but the wording of the Son of God. This model gives no place for selfishness; others must be included, even our enemies. While we may be alone in our prayer unto God, we must not pray as if we are alone in the world; there are others which the Christian must keep in mind in his petitions unto God. While we are to pray for others, we are not to pray for the salvation of men and women in the absence of their obedience to the message of the Lord. Without obedience to the gospel of the Christ there is no salvation, and our prayers should never be petitions unto God to save them outside of that obedience. We may pray for the salvation of man, but we must take the gospel to him in order that he may know of the plan of the Lord in salvation.

We should pray as if we are out of the world and in the presence of the Almighty only to be heard by Him. The one leading a public prayer should speak loud enough for all present to hear him; not for

the purpose of being heard, but in order that those who are praying with him might be able to say "amen" when he has finished. We are not to make a show of our prayers, but pray as from our inner chambers with the Lord as our audience.

3. Fasting. Matthew 6:16-18. This is the third illustration used by Jesus to show that our righteousness is not to be done before men to be seen of them. He said that his disciples are not to put on a sad countenance, or disfigure their faces that they may appear to fast unto men; for the simple reason that this again is a relation between man and God. The principle of fasting is that of self-denial or sacrifice. We are not to make a show of that—there must be self-denial; there must be restraint; there must be fasting. We must not do this in order that men may think how good we are. When this is done, the end has been realized and all the reward has been received. Fasting then has been taken from the place of relation between man and God to that of man to man. Jesus put fasting or self-denial on the plane of relation between God and man. It is self-denial and mortification of the flesh. Its purpose is to curb the flesh with its desires in order to make us more lively in religious exercises. Paul said that he was in fastings often, and thereby he was able to keep his body under subjection, lest that after he had preached unto others he might be a castaway.

To those of you who are neglecting your souls, let me impress upon you that this teaching of Jesus calls for a denial of the flesh as we mortify or put to death our members. This is the humbling of the soul—the inward part of man. How much selfdenial is there in our lives? Of what have we denied ourselves that our souls may feast on the bread of life? We should not spend our time for the things of the flesh to the neglect of our souls. Too many professed Christians are doing this very thing in missing the worship of the saints in order to enjoy "the pleasures of sin for a season." Man may reward us for our attachment to our loved ones; but if in so doing we are neglecting our duty to our Lord, there is no reward from Him. Our relation with our Lord is more important than our relation with men. Heaven is worth more than earth.

B. Warnings against Worldly Mindedness. Matt. 6:19-23. Many of us have not yet learned our true relationship to earthly things—we still have our hearts set upon the things of this world instead of the next. But when we have learned our relation to things that perish, and have set our affections on the things that abide, we shall be able to get out of Christianity what there is for us. But to the language of Jesus.

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth

nor dust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Jesus is not, in these verses, teaching against possessions, but he is teaching his disciples not to set their hearts upon earthly things. The reason for this is simple. Jesus said, "Where your treasure is there will your heart be." He does not want his disciples to have their hearts set upon this earth, but rather that their hearts might be set upon higher things—upon heavenly things. In other words, there must be no rival in the heart of the Christian—the Lord must have first place. God is not going to take second place. He never did, and he is not going to now. Too few people are able to see the hand of the Lord in the things that are temporal, and with too much stress upon earthly possessions they make earthly things the goal toward which they strive. In order to obtain this they neglect their duty to God, and thus attempt to give unto the Almighty a divided heart. This he will not have; he must have first place in our hearts or none at all.

To enforce the importance of singleness of purpose Jesus uses an illustration to help his disciples see the providence of God in the affairs of life. He said, "The light of the body is the eye, if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!"

May we read this with the full meaning of the unusual contrast found in our English translation. "The light of the body is the eye. If thine eye be liberal thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be stingy, grudging, or niggard, thy whole body shall be full of darkness." In other words, when thine eye is healthy you can see to do your daily work; when diseased, you are in darkness. So it is with the eye of the soul, the heart, the seat of desire. When it is free from covetousness, not anxious to hoard, all goes well with our spiritual functions—we choose and act wisely. When sordid passions possess it there is darkness within deeper than that which afflicts the blind man. We mistake the relative value of things, choose the worse, neglect the better, or flatter ourselves that we can have both. What a lesson!

Then is your eye liberal which enables you to see in earthly treasures just what is therein contained—that they cannot satisfy the longings of the soul, and are only for time; that only the heavenly treasures are those which satisfy and last forever? Or, on the other hand, are your eyes stingy and refuse to see the true relative value of the treasures about which the Master is here speaking? No man is so blind as he who refuses to see the truth in regard to treasures because of the stinginess of his eyes; who willfully closes his eyes to the true value of earthly and heavenly things. Are our eyes liberal enough

to see "The Glory of the Lord in the Things that are Temporal?" Too many people go through life with their eyes more than half closed, and do not see the things that are provided of the Lord for those who will only make the necessary effort. We have the shades of our eyes—the windows of the soul—pulled to the bottom, and refuse to let pass through them into the soul that which the Lord has provided for his people. But that you may be able to see more of the beauty which the Lord has provided, and that you may see it in its true relative value, this material has been prepared. I trust that I shall be able to draw the curtain aside far enough for you to "See the Glory of the Lord," even in this world.

1. What do you see in the world in which you live? "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof," should be enough for us to think seriously of the value of the providence of God in the temporal things of life. When Jesus came to earth, he came to his own created world—not to his own people. John 1:11. It is his by right of creation, for "All things were created for and by him." John 1:3. Since the world was created by Jesus for his glory and for man's happiness, do you not think that there are many things in it that man should see and enjoy? In spite of the fact that the Lord cursed the earth because of the sin of Adam in the Garden, he did not deliver this world over to satan to operate according to his own choosing. I shall admit that satan has had a hand in much of the government of earth, but the Lord, through Jesus the Christ, is on the throne of the universe ruling over men and angels. No man on earth can escape his judgment. The rule of the Christ must have first place in the heart of man; still man is responsible unto him even though he does not let the Christ rule in his heart, for the "powers that be are ordained of God." Romans 13:1.

What are some of the beauties you see in the world as you travel through life? Along the highways, do you see only the waste land beyond which may be seen the rough and rugged hills fit only for the grazing of goats? Or, on the other hand, do you see the fields which produce for man, not only his living, but also much of the profit of the world? And then beyond this do you see the gray cliffs upon which God hangs his beautiful pictures? It is difficult at times to understand why things happen as they do; and often we wonder if the Lord has not deserted the throne and turned the whole matter over to satan for his own arrangement. We need to study the book of Habakkuk and learn the lesson there given him of the Lord. When the prophet complained that God was not doing anything about the wickedness of his time, he was told, "I work a work in your day ye will not believe even when it is told you." The Lord then explains to the prophet his plan, whereupon the prophet declares, "Lord you are too good to do such a thing, to use a wicked king to punish a people

not so wicked as he." But after the future is unfolded unto him, he exclaims, "For though the fig-tree shall not flourish, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no food; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in Jehovah, I will joy in the God of my salvation. Jehovah, the Lord, is my strength; and he maketh my feet like hinds' feet, and will make me to walk upon my high places." Habakkuk 3:17-19. What a poem of praise to come from the man who had complained that the providence of God had been removed from the earth. In the world in which we live may our eyes see the glory of the Lord in spite of the things which tend to mar the beauty of his handiwork.

2. What do you see in the Bible? It is not just another book, it is The Book whose different parts fit perfectly together as the story of the Lord is unfolded. Each of the sixty-six books of the Bible fit as perfectly into the major theme as did the stones in Solomon's temple. There is no finality in the Old Testament itself, for here we have the foreshadowing of the good things to come. The messages of the Prophets in the Old Testament are but the whisperings of the public declarations of the Christ; they are but the humming of the perfect music of the Son of God which we find in the New Testament. Thus out of the dark past in the Old Testament record we have the dawning of the light which leads us to the full orb'd day in the story of the Christ. From the shadow of the Old Testament story we come into the light of the Son of Righteousness as revealed in the New Testament. The Old Testament, therefore, is God's revelation unto man of his preparation of the New. To read either of the Testaments to the exclusion of the other is to have an imperfect conception or understanding of either God or man. Thus, the revelation of the Old Testament is valuable, but it is incomplete in the unfolding of the Eternal Purpose of God. It only introduces that which we find complete in the New Testament.

The book of Genesis occupies an important place at the beginning of the story of man in his relationship unto God and the universe, for here we have the major theme of the Bible introduced; namely, "Man's relation to God and the adjustment of that relationship." If the statements concerning the beginnings, and man's relationship to God, cannot be depended upon as they are found in the book of Genesis, then there can be no truthfulness in Christianity. For in Genesis we have the initial statements of all of the major themes in the Bible. If these statements of this book cannot be depended upon, then there is no truthfulness in the Bible, and if no truthfulness in the Bible, then there is no truthfulness in any other book. This book makes assertions not to be found in any other record on earth, for these assertions go back of all human research concerning the seven fundamental

themes of the universe. Man in all his search for knowledge is unable to trace his thread of information all the way back to the assertions of the book of Genesis. Thus the supreme value of this information in Genesis has not been fully realized; not even by the saints of the Lord. The contribution which this makes to Christianity has often been overlooked in man's inadequate study of its contents.

The story of Genesis is not only true, its lessons also are valuable and permanent in order to a correct understanding of the story of God's relationship to and his purpose for man in the universe. From no other source can this information be obtained, for it is not to be found in any other record of earth. All of the statements of men concerning the seven fundamental truths of the universe must be interpreted in the light of the information which is revealed in the book of Genesis. But, you ask, what are these seven fundamental truths? They are the truths concerning our first knowledge of: God, the universe, man, society or the family, sin, the human race, and salvation. These are the seven fundamental truths of the universe, and the first word concerning them is to be found in the book of Genesis, and in no other record. There is not a theme introduced in the Bible that does not have its initial statement in the book of Genesis. Here everything is begun but few things are finished. It is, therefore, the book of beginnings.

These truths of Genesis are not to be discovered by the investigation of human wisdom—they are to be discovered only by the revelation of God. This revelation is recorded in the book of Genesis. No other record of earth contains the initial statement concerning these truths which are here recorded. And no discovery of man has ever yet contradicted one thing in all of the assertions of Genesis concerning these major themes. Yes, in the Bible mine eyes have seen the glory of the Lord.

• 3. What do you see in Christianity, or the gospel of the Christ? Our salvation from past sins is not the end for which the gospel was given. We were made Christians as a means to an end; namely, that man may stand in a perfect state of relationship with his maker in the other world. In other words, man was redeemed in order that he might make proper adjustment in his relationship with his Lord.

When man was created and placed in the Garden of Eden he was in the presence of God; he was in a complete happy state; he had access to the tree of life where he might eat of the fruit and live forever; but he was surrounded with evil. This was not intended to be man's final resting place, or state or relationship. But surrounding man with evil God was giving him an opportunity to prove his worthiness to stand in a perfect state of relationship with his Maker forever in glory. What the effects of evil might be in the life of man, God did not choose to know. But he had already arranged the means

whereby this effect of evil in the life of man might be forever removed through the blood of the Christ which was "planned from before the foundation of the world." 1 Peter 1:20. This will help us to understand the statement of Paul to Titus: "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." Titus 1:2. This is the "Eternal Purpose of God, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Read Ephesians 3:1-12.

With Christ as our guide, and Christianity as our religion, we shall be able to walk the path of life and see the beauty of the Lord. The sun will cause the leaves to cast their shadows in our path as it leads winding through the trees. But it is not necessary always to be walking in the path that winds among the trees, and to see the patterns of the leaves ahead, nor to hear the singing of the birds to convince the saints of the Lord that God's ways are always fair. Whether we walk in the path that leads through the woods, or over the hills, we can be like the shepherd who said, "The Lord leadeth me beside the still waters, and restoreth my soul."

There are times when the path which must be traveled by the saints of God will be anything but a smooth path leading among the trees; for it often leads among the thorns and the rocks where we stump our toes and measure our length on the ground. It is the rough road which we travel that makes us appreciate the smooth when we find it. But whether we walk the path that leads among the trees, or the one that leads through the hot sands of the desert, we must remember that our Lord before us has walked them all with such perfection that he "left us an example that we should follow in his steps." He was often disappointed but never discouraged, for he never took his eyes off the goal which led ultimately to his Father. The reason that we often are discouraged in our disappointments is that we lose sight of our goal and are able to see only the today.

But when the trials of life beset us, and the beauties of the Lord we shall be able to see, we shall then understand that through these we are led for the purpose of training for the more difficult problems of life that await us just down the road. If our walking were always in the paths that were smooth, we should never be able to sympathize with those who are forced to walk in the rocky paths of the hillside. We cannot always walk in the smooth path that leads through the forest, or in the valley below; for he who never climbs the mountain is never able to see the beauty in the valley that lies between the hills. We often sympathize with him who is called upon to climb the rough and rugged hills of life's experiences; but he who climbs these hills and is able to "view the landscape o'er" is the one who sympathizes with him who is content to remain at the foot of the hill, and is not willing to pay the price which is required to climb the rugged path that winds its way up the hillside to the point from

which one may obtain a clearer view of the beauty in the distance, and who can see long after it has become dark in the valley below.

We often complain that our path is too rough and the hill is too steep as we travel our road each day! The reason for this is that we are thinking only of the present and the problems of the hour, rather than what these experiences may mean to us under the providence of the Lord. We are looking down where we place our feet rather than to the goal toward which we travel. We are thinking of the today, and not of the tomorrow when we shall be tired no more. We should then remember that God's ways, whether they lead among the trees, on the planes, through the desert, in the valley, or up the mountain side, are always fair; and His blessings are on him who walks this way with his hand in the unseen hand of him who died upon calvary that man might be redeemed in glory. This is what Christianity will do for us. Too many people think only of what Christianity can do to us, without thinking of what it can do for us. Can we take it and thus use it in life so that even in Christianity we can see the glory of the Lord? This will enable us to see the relative value of temporal things in comparison with the spiritual. We thus see the true value of things temporal.

4. What do you see in the church of our Lord? This is not just another religious organization, but it is that called together group of people who have been called together by the Christ and are to be governed by his law which is recorded in the New Testament. It is not enough to be called together by Christ, we must be governed by his law in order that we may be the church of our Lord. But what do you see in this group of people? It should be our spiritual home while here on earth we are to stay. It should give unto us our richest associations as we meet together for the worship which our Master has called for in the law which he gave to govern us. It is that group of people to whom the Lord adds all the saved, and in which all of our service to the Almighty should be given. "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end." Ephesians 3:21. This is the only religious institution in which glory and honor can be given unto God.

The church of our Lord should occupy the chief place in all our conversation and planning. We should make everything else contribute to its growth. We should never let anything interfere with our attitude toward and relationship to the church of our Lord; even our family relationships. Everything else is secondary; the church of our Lord must be first. Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, and we must love it more than we love our own lives; and, if necessary, give our lives for the church and what it means in the world. In all of our conversation and in our conduct we should think of the influence upon the church of our Lord. We should work to lift the

church in the estimate of the people in order that we may lead them to the Christ. We should be able to see in the church of our Lord the greatest challenge of life to be a "worker together with God" in the salvation of lost souls. We should never miss any of the services of the worship of the saints, not only because of the good that we might obtain from them, but also for the good that we might be able to do in interesting others as well as the contribution which we might make to the work which the church is supposed to do. Since it is the "pillar and ground of the truth," we must give to it our best in life. In it we serve the Lord as we make our preparations for the home in eternity. Yea, we need to see the glory of the Lord in the church as we understand its purpose in the world and our relationship to it. May we never bring reproach upon it, nor retard its progress; but help it to be as a city that is set on a hill that cannot be hid.

5. What do you see in Jesus the Christ? Read again the introduction to our study of the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus is the richest personality in history as he makes complete adjustment to all environments as he meets them. While his personality was rejected by the people of Jerusalem, yet it was accepted of his Father. In thus making his adjustments to life's experiences he does so to the greatest good of all concerned. Since he is our example and we are to follow in his steps, we thus learn that a wholesome adjustment to our experiences of life may not always be the easiest thing to do, but it is the best for all concerned.

Matthew establishes the fact that Jesus of Nazareth is the King of the Prophet's predictions; he is the one about whom the Psalmist sang in the long ago; he is the one about whom Israel dreamed; he is the "suffering servant" of Isaiah; he is "the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief"; he is the "sheep that was led to the slaughter," and was dumb in his crucifixion as they nailed him to the cross. No prediction of the coming King is to be found in the Prophets that does not have its fulfilment in the Christ of Matthew's story of Jesus. He is the Christ and we need not look for another. He did all that he came to do, and we need not expect him to return for the purpose of finishing that which he could not do the first time. The Jews of Palestine did not block his purpose, nor could Satan hold him in the grave. There was power given to him greater than earth and hell combined; and although they nailed him to the cross, they could not hold him in the tomb.

He is the Prophet, Priest, and King as he represents God to man and intercedes in our behalf before the throne of God while he rules in the universe. There is no position which the Prophets said he would occupy which he does not now fulfil as he sits on the throne of the universe ruling over men and angels. He is the end of the Law of Moses; the last in the line of David; the King on Heaven's Throne;

the Saviour of the world; the ransom price for sin; man's greatest inspiration, and the world's most faithful friend.

No wonder the angels sang when he was born; Satan laughed when he died; the saints rejoiced when he was raised, and the heavenly host lifted the gates of glory when he ascended. And when he took his seat at the right hand of the Majesty on high, God delivered the inaugural address which is recorded in Hebrews 1:8-12.

The founder of Christianity has been tried, crucified, and crowned; and by the authority of heaven he has issued his orders to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark 16:15,16.

What a character! What a story! What a challenge! In it all mine eyes have seen the glory of the Lord. Our eyes should therefore be liberal enough to see the relative value of earthly things with respect to the spiritual values of life. Thus we are to lay up for ourselves heavenly treasures and use this world to contribute to our Christianity.

C. Warnings against distrustful cares. Matthew 6:24-34. In these verses, Jesus continues with further illustrations in order that he may emphasize the importance of understanding the relative value of earthly things. He said, "No one can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Thus no one is able to be occupied in the service of two masters or lords at the same time. For he who attempts this will find that he cannot love both, for his affections are divided between the two whom he is attempting to serve. He is sure to regard one with less affection than the other. He who attempts such service will find that he is devoted to the one whom he loves, and is slighting or neglecting the one for whom he has less affections.

God has always demanded whole-hearted service of his people—he will not accept a divided heart. Therefore, nothing must interfere with the rule of God in the heart of the individual. God will have first place in our hearts or none at all. He does not condemn possessions when, as servants of the Christ, they are used in the service and help of others. The thing that Jesus is warning against here is the danger of permitting possessions to loom larger in the heart than obedience to the will of God. This, when done, will cause one to give second place to spiritual things, and wealth becomes the object of worship. Christians cannot serve God and earthly possessions for the simple reason that it would be a divided affection between God and earthly things. Then choose you this day whom you will serve—God or earthly possessions.

Jesus then follows with a request which occurs three times in the remaining part of the paragraph. He said, "Be not anxious for your

life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on." This is found in verse 25 and again in verse 31, and then in verse 34 he follows with the suggestion that his disciples are not to be anxious about the future. Jesus gives three reasons why the citizens of the kingdom should not be anxious, over careful, or worry, about the future as it concerns their food, clothing, and shelter. In verses 25 to 31, Jesus tells his disciples that this anxiety or worry is contrary to the lessons of nature, and is therefore not necessary. He calls their attention to the birds of the air and the lilies of the fields, and states that "your heavenly Father has made provision for them to live—he takes care of them." Then will he not manifest as much interest in his people and make it possible for them to have the necessities of life, since he has endowed them with the intelligence and the ability to labor for their provisions? Paul said unto the saints in Philippi, "My God shall supply all your needs." Philippians 4:19.

Jesus then climaxes his first reason why his disciples should not worry by calling their attention to the lilies of the field. He said, "Even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed as one of these." In the eyes of God, after we have done all that we can with earthly treasures to adorn ourselves, we can never appear as beautiful as the lilies of the valley—then why keep trying? Let us adorn the soul rather than the body, for this is what the Lord wants. Therefore the anxiety and worry about food, shelter, and clothing is all contrary to the lessons we find in nature. God has promised to help his people, but he has not promised to give them these things without effort on their part. He has said that "I will never leave thee alone." Do we believe this? Then why do we worry about the food, shelter, and clothing for the body?

For the citizens of the kingdom to be anxious about temporal things is contrary to the teaching of the gospel, for Jesus said, "After all these things the Gentiles seek." Those who make no pretention to be Christians spend their time in anxiety about the things of the future; but for those who are Christians, members of the family of God, to worry about the things of the future is a lack of faith and confidence in the Lord. Jesus said, "Your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things." He then adds, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." For Christians to be anxious, over careful, or to worry about the provisions and the shelter of life, is to plainly declare that they do not believe God when he said that he would never leave nor forsake his people; or it is a plain declaration that they are not following God as they know that they should and are afraid of the future.

Christians must "seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness" as their chief concern in life. We must strive to be what God wants us to be—this should be the motto for which we will give our all. But

in doing this, Jesus did not say that we are not to give any attention to the provisions of the body. In assuming our responsibility in making provision for those who are dependent upon us, we are doing the will of God. But the child of God is not to make this his chief thing in life. He must not let the things of this life interfere with his service to God. To neglect our duty to God, in order that we may be able to supply the necessary things of life, is to devote too much time and consideration to the body, and not enough to the interest of the soul. We must realize our proper relation to things that are temporal. We must remember that we are stewards of God, and what we are, and what we have, really belong to him. Our possessions have been entrusted into our hands to be used for the honor and glory of the Lord. For us to use them for our own good to the neglect of our duty unto our God is to be unfaithful stewards. It means a complete surrender of the individual and all of his possessions into the service of the Lord. It does not mean that we will forfeit our right to our possessions; but it does mean that we will use them for the one whom we serve as stewards. We have undertaken the task of managing our possessions for God, and we are to use what God has entrusted into our care and keeping as a means of accomplishing the will of God.

For the citizens of the kingdom to worry about the things for the future is to distrust the providence of God. Jesus said, "Be not therefore anxious for the morrow: for the morrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." In other words, why worry about the tomorrow? That is in the future, and is in the hands of the Lord. What can you do about the tomorrow? We have enough to take care of today. Why cross the bridges before we get to them? There may not be any bridges.

Then for the citizens of the kingdom of heaven to be anxious or to worry about the things of the tomorrow as to what they shall eat, or what they shall wear, or where they shall live, or what is going to happen to them, is a plain declaration that they have not learned the simple lessons of nature in the economy of God, and do not have sufficient faith in the revelation of the Lord, and have no confidence in the providence of God. Then why do we worry about these things? The reason goes back to the statement of Jesus in his warnings against worldly mindedness in which he said: "Lay not up for yourselves earthly treasures where moth and rust consume, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves heavenly treasures where neither moth nor rust doth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is there will your heart be also." Matthew 6:19-21.

Jesus is thus showing the folly of putting ones affections on the things of this earth for the satisfaction of the desires and inclina-

tions of the flesh to the neglect of the soul. He shows that this cannot be done and at the same time be well pleasing unto God. Then why be so foolish as to try that which the Son of God says cannot be done.

The Master has thus driven home the lesson that the will of God must reign supreme in the hearts of men and women. We must not permit anything, regardless of how dear it may be to us, to interfere with the rule of God in our hearts. We will thus have submitted unto the righteousness of God, and will not be going about to establish our own righteousness. This must be our chief concern in life—obedience to the will of God. Thus having been “born of the water and the spirit,” we become “new creatures in the Christ”; having been “raised to walk in newness of life”; we are to “set our affections on things above, and not on things of this life”; and thus “being not conformed to this world, but being transformed by the renewing of our minds” we may be able to prove to the world that the will of God is good, acceptable, and perfect in making out of man what God wants him to be. In order that this might be accomplished, we must “lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, ignoring the shame, and is set down on the right hand of the throne of God.” Hebrews 12:1-2.

VII. THE ATTITUDES OF THE CITIZENS, Matthew 7:1-12.

The Master has closed his warnings unto his disciples, and is now revealing unto them how they are to heed these warnings—how they are to reproduce in their conduct the guiding principles which he has been giving them.

A. **There must be no censorious judgment.** Matthew 7:1-2. In this Jesus said: “Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.” In this Jesus issues a universal prohibition against passing judgment.

But it is necessary that we understand the statement of our Lord when he said: “Judge not, that ye be not judged.” To make this mean what our Lord did not have in mind would be unfair unto the word of the Lord, and would make Jesus teach that which he did not intend. We can be sure of the fact that this statement does not forbid the following kinds of judgment:

1. It does not prohibit the judgment of Civil Courts, because this is approved by the teaching of the apostles as we shall read:

“Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well.” I Peter 2:13, 14.

"Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work." Titus 3:1.

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." Romans 13:1.

Thus the statement of Jesus not to judge does not forbid the judgment of our Civil Courts, for how could the laws of our land be enforced?

2. This statement of our Lord does not forbid the judgment of the church against those who walk disorderly; this also was ordered by Christ and his apostles.

"Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." Matthew 18:15-17.

"A man that is a heretick after the first and second admonition reject: knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself." Titus 3:10, 11.

"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which ye received from us. And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." 2 Thess. 3:6, 14, 15.

"If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God's speed. For he that bideth him God's speed is partaker of his evil deeds." 2 John 10.

These, and others, show clearly that the statement of Jesus not to judge does not forbid judgment on the part of the church against evil doers.

3. This statement of Jesus not to judge does not forbid private judgment against wrong doers.

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits." Matthew 7:15, 16.

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." Romans 16:17.

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." 1 John 4:1.

"But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is a brother be a fornicator, or a covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat." 1 Corinthians 5:11.

These passages show that this statement of Jesus not to judge does not forbid the three classes of judgment just mentioned; namely, judgment of Civil Courts, the judgment of the church against evil doers, and private judgment as to those in sin.

But just what does Jesus mean when he says, "Judge not, that ye be not judged?" This is a commandment of our Lord against harsh, censorious, destructive judgment. It is a demand of Jesus against fault-finding, or the disposition which condemns upon a supposition, or upon circumstantial evidence, without examining the facts in the case. Those who do this are forgetful of the fact that they will face the same kind of judgment of the Lord, and that they will find that they are in need of mercy. For "with what judgment you meet it shall be measured unto you again."

Therefore we should avoid all harsh, uncharitable, and censorious judgment. We do not have all the evidence, and should, therefore, withhold our judgment. We are too prone to jump at our conclusions—it would be well for us to look where we jump.

But Jesus further said: "With what judgment you judge ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you again." He who shows no mercy in his judgment of others will receive no mercy from God, for Jesus declares that God will have judgment without mercy upon him who hath shown no mercy. James 2:13.

B. Self-correction should be first. Matthew 7:3-5. "Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye: and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."

Jesus here represents a man with a whole plank in his eye trying to pick a splinter out of his brother's eye. We must be charitable in our judgment of others, because they are God's servants and the Almighty reserves the right to pass judgment upon both them and us. Therefore, we are to "Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment." John 7:24. For "who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth." Romans 14:4.

The lesson here is that he who would successfully teach others must first teach himself; for "brethren, if any man be overtaken in a fault ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of

meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." Galatians 6:1. In the teaching of Christianity, men and women are to be led, not pushed; and those who teach must lead the way. Paul emphasizes this same thought in his admonitions to Timothy when he told him to "let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, in purity." 1 Timothy 4:12. As long, therefore, as we continue in sin we shall be blind leaders of the blind. We should be very cautious about our judgment concerning others; for Paul told the Roman brethren that, "thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?" Romans 2:1-3.

Jesus is here teaching his disciples that they must reform their own lives in order that they may be able to help other people reform theirs. The difficulty is not that others do not see their own faults, but they are not willing to recognize the faults of their own lives. The censorious man is not ignorant of his own faults; he does not let his mind rest on them. It is more pleasant to think of the faults of others than to think of our own. This is often done by people who hear a sermon that is not pleasant—they want to think of some one else that the sermon fits. Let us see ourselves as we are seen of the Lord and set about correcting our mistakes in order that we may be able to help others correct their lives. He who is constantly dwelling on the faults of others has a greater fault which he refuses to correct.

C. Do not give to others that which they do not need. Matthew 7:6. "Give not that which is holy unto dogs, neither cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you."

Jesus has just told his disciples not to judge; yet, here he tells them that they must know people, else they would make a mistake, such as giving holy things unto dogs, or casting pearls before swine. Thus, there must be some form of judging.

We must know both the gospel and the people to whom we are to take the gospel. When we have created both the desire and the need of the gospel of the Christ, much of our work of teaching them the story of the Christ has been removed. The lives which we as Christians are to live before others is to inspire them to want that kind of life. We thus create within them a desire for the gospel of Christ which will make Christians of them. But if our example before others is no inspiration unto them to want that kind of life, then we

will be wasting our time in an effort to tell them of the story of the Christ. Jesus not only told the world how to live; he showed the world how to live. This we must do before the world is going to be interested in accepting the message which we have for them.

Jesus had said to his disciples, "Ye are the light of the world." He also said that they were "the salt of the earth." But salt that has lost its saltiness cannot be salted again. What about the Christian who has lost his influence for the Christ? What a tragedy!

D. Seek the things of God. Matthew 7:7-11. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him."

Before we can maintain the proper attitude toward others it is necessary that we have the proper attitude toward and relationship to God. Jesus here drives his disciples back into that proper relationship with God in order that they may know when not to pass judgment; and the kind of judgment not to be given; and, at the same time, know when to discriminate so as not to "give that which is holy unto dogs, or to cast their pearls before swine." It is impossible for man to manifest the proper relationship with God without the proper attitude toward his teaching. This Jesus is discussing in the verses just given.

What are the citizens of the kingdom to ask for? What are they to seek, and what shall be opened? Just what do these words mean, and how can we apply them to our lives? These are questions that should be given our serious consideration.

What about the word "ask"? We are told that Jesus never used this word in connection with his prayers unto the Father. The word here means to beg in the sense of dependence. It has been referred to as the man who comes before God with empty hands, recognizing his utter dependence upon God. Jesus used the word in his prayers that meant to enquire as one upon equality. But man must recognize that he is dependent upon God, and then come before him conscious of that dependence. But Jesus said, "every one that asketh receiveth." Did he mean by this that every person, regardless of his condition or relationship to God, could ask of God and receive that for which he asked? Let Jesus answer that in the following words:

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Matthew 7:21. Here we see that it means more

than just merely asking. To know that God does not hear the prayers of every person one needs to read these passages.

"But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." Isaiah 66:2.

"Now we know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth." John 9:31.

"He saith unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of Man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? for they have filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke me to anger: and lo, they put the branch to their nose. Therefore, will I also deal in fury; mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them." Ezekiel 8:17, 18.

Here we have a group of God's chosen people whom he had shielded and protected doing such things that God said that he would not hear their prayers. Surely if God would refuse to hear the prayers of those people when they refused to live according to his will, then he will not hear the prayers of just any one today. But there is a stronger passage in Proverbs 28:9.

"He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be an abomination."

This should be enough to convince us that to ask something of God we should first hear his Word and do what he has asked us to do, and then we may ask of him and expect an answer. Paul teaches this same thought in his letter to the Romans saints. Hear him:

"Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Romans 10:13-17.

The process, therefore, is simple. One is taught the word of the Lord as it has been revealed and recorded in the Bible; he understands it; he believes it and then obeys the commands that are given to him. This puts him in position to ask of God the desires of his heart, and he will be heard. When we read our Bible it is God talking and we are listening to obey. When we pray we are doing the talking and God is listening to bless. Do you think that it is fair to expect God to listen to what we have to say and bless us before we have listened to what he has to say unto us? Let us first listen to what God has to say unto us in his word, and then obey his commands, then we can talk to him and he has promised to bless; for "the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated between you and your

God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." Isaiah 59:1.

These words teach us that to be heard of God when we ask of him anything, we must conform our lives to his teaching. This is all included in the statement of Jesus when he said, "Ask and ye shall receive."

Jesus also said, "seek, and ye shall find." Of course it is understood that we must seek where the Lord has taught, and in the way he has revealed, as well as for that which he has promised. Jesus declared that we must "seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matthew 6:33.

The word seek in this connection implies care, or true anxiety, concerning the things of God which he has revealed unto men. But we must seek in God's own appointments, for he cannot be found outside his appointments. In these, and in these alone, can we find him; and this seeking must be according to his directions.

"God hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." See Ephesians 1:3. Spiritual blessings are not to be found anywhere else. And Peter, guided by the Spirit of the Lord, said, "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12. And Paul says, "In Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Colossians 2:3. Then why seek for God and righteousness where they cannot be found? If we will seek for the truth as it is revealed in the gospel of the Christ, we can there find the kind of life that we should live and the attitudes which we should manifest toward others, "Seek and ye shall find."

"Knock, and it shall be opened unto you," said Jesus. Some one has said that God opens only the doors that man cannot open for himself. This word "knock" here carries with it the idea of fervency, and constancy. Our asking and seeking must be fervent and constant. Keep seeking for the truth as given in the Lord's word with all fervency and constancy—never giving up—keep on searching and asking for guidance, and Jesus declares that it shall be opened unto you.

"If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." John 7:17. The great truths of God's word, and the ability to make the proper application of these truths to the life of the individual do not come to one without effort on his part. Jesus said, "ask" and "knock". The great lessons God would have us know and practice do not open unto us without effort on our part. Paul told Timothy to "study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Timothy 2:15.

God is not unmindful of his people, neither has he gone on a long journey. His eyes are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto

their prayers. But he is not going to answer the prayers of his saints when they turn their ears away from the hearing of his law. Faithfulness unto God is essential unto the answer of our prayers. Thus, in order that we may not pass censorious judgment upon another, but at the same time make such discriminations between individuals who do right and those who do wrong, we need to "Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." Jeremiah 6:16. Jesus said, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." John 15:7. Our prayers are answered in no other way.

E. **The golden rule.** Matthew 7:12. "All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do to you; do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets." This is the climax of all that Jesus has said thus far in this chapter. The preceding statements serve as the foundation of this one.

Since you would not like for others to pass censorious judgment upon you, then do not do this unto others. We like for others to refrain from passing judgment upon us from what they may see in our actions—they do not know our hearts, and should therefore not pass judgment upon us. Then let us show this same consideration unto them.

We do not like for others to attempt to correct the mistakes in our lives when we know that they have greater ones in their own lives—this we believe to be unfair. Then Jesus said that we should be careful in our efforts to correct the lives of others. We should correct our own lives before we attempt to correct the lives of others.

If we would do unto others as we would that they should do unto us, this would be a better world in which to live. There would be no unkind words in the home, in business dealings, or in the church. All strife and dissension would be removed from the world because it would have been removed from our hearts. Then let us manifest this disposition toward others, for we want others to be kind unto us, as well as courteous, and considerate. Too many of us are like David when the prophet pointed out to him some wrong that a certain man had done unto another. David said the man should be hung; but when David saw that he was that man, he wanted a prayer meeting. Will we be as quick to condemn the wrong in our lives as we are to condemn it in the lives of others?

VIII. IMPORTANCE OF RIGHT BEGINNING. Matthew 7:13, 14.

"Enter in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

These two verses contain the teaching of Jesus at this time on

the "Importance, or the responsibility, of the beginning." This is an important part of the teaching of our Lord, and should be given serious consideration by all people in order that they may be sure that they have made the right beginning—that they have entered the right way that leads unto the Lord in the glory world. Jesus not only advises the proper thing to do, he also warns against doing the wrong thing. He then gives his reasons for this warning.

"Enter in at the strait gate," said Jesus, for the other gate is wide and the road is broad which leads to destruction. Jesus here discusses the two gates and the two ways. One way leads to life; the other leads to destruction. These two ways lead to the two destinies of the soul—heaven and hell. There is no other destiny for the soul, neither is there any other way than the one mentioned by Jesus. He tells his disciples that the narrow way leads to life, while the broad way leads unto destruction. Let us notice the gates as well as the ways as here mentioned by Jesus.

"Strait is the gate," said Jesus. The word "strait" in this verse is an interesting word as it is applied by Jesus to the entrance into the one way to heaven, or into the kingdom. It simply means narrow, compressed within a small compass, not easy of entrance, laborious of entrance. How fitting this word is as it is used here by our Lord in this connection when compared with his statement concerning the difficulty of entrance into the kingdom by those who trust in riches when he said, "How hardly shall they that trust in riches enter into the kingdom." Mark 10:23, 24.

The rich young ruler was not willing to pay the price of entrance into the kingdom. He loved the riches he had more than he loved the Lord, and was not willing to part with them in order to follow the Master. He did not love the Lord enough to leave outside the gate that which he was told would be necessary in order to enter the kingdom or to be saved. It does cost something. It is not an easy thing for some people to enter through this gate. It is narrow; and in order to pass through it into the kingdom of heaven, we must leave many things on the outside. You cannot take through this gate all the pleasures of the world; such as, selfishness, enmity, evil speaking, guile, hatred, and many other things. These all must be laid aside and left in the kingdom of the world where they belong. They do not belong in the kingdom of the Lord.

To enter the strait gate and travel this narrow way we must leave selfishness on the outside—we must empty ourselves. This must be the first thing. We must give ourselves wholly to God in order to pass through this gate. We must not attempt to follow our own wills in the matter, but we must follow the will of Him who doeth all things well. We, like the Israelites of old, have left all the world with its pleasures of sin for a season where they belong—on

the outside. We can then say, Father, not my will, but thine be done. When we have emptied ourselves, we can then say:

"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and, like the apostle Paul, when we have learned from the word of the Lord what he wants us to do we will do it with all our might. We shall not take the time to confer with flesh and blood, but will do all that we have learned that our Lord wants us to do.

The trouble with too many people is they have not yet emptied themselves. They want to be saved according to their own way, or according to the way some man has outlined for them. Why not leave with men all the ways they have arranged and take what the gospel of Christ teaches about our entrance into the kingdom of God? Men have devised many ways that are not in harmony with the way of the Lord. There is only one way into the kingdom, for Jesus said, "I am the way." John 14:6.

This helps to better understand the language of Paul in which he said: "If any be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." 2 Corinthians 5:17. Here the individual has emptied himself; he has laid aside the things of this world that are contrary to Christianity, and he has entered through the strait gate and is now ready to travel this narrow way; for he is in Christ, or in the way that leads home.

Peter said, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." 1 Peter 2:2. And, "Being born again, not of corruptable seed, but of incorruptable, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." 1 Peter 1:23. But preceding this he said, "Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." 1 Peter 1:22. He certainly identifies "being born again" with "obeying the truth." Paul used a similar expression when he said, "But ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." Romans 6:17, 18. Thus obeying from the heart the form of doctrine which had been delivered means the same thing as "obeying the truth" or "being born again," for they produce the same thing; namely, freedom from sin or purification of the soul.

But Paul said, "If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above." Colossians 3:1. But he also said, "Buried with him in baptism wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who raised him from the dead." Colossians 2:12. Thus, Paul tells these brethren when they were raised with Christ—when they were raised from the watery grave of baptism. They were then to set their affection on the things above, for they are new creatures in Christ; they have "obeyed the truth"; they have

"been born again"; they have passed through the "strait gate"; they are now walking "the narrow way that leads to life."

But Paul continues, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection; knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Romans 6:3-6. Thus, we have put off the old man, and have put on the new. But how is this done, some one may ask? When one has died to sin through the conviction of the truth of the gospel he is buried, as suggested by Paul, in the waters of baptism, from which he is then raised with Christ a new creature to set his affections on things above. When one has done this, he has thus proved his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ by doing the things which Jesus has asked of individuals in order that they might enter through the "strait gate" and be permitted to travel the "narrow way."

This whole process includes the preaching of the gospel to a person; his belief of that teaching, with his willingness to empty himself, having repented of his sins; a public declaration of his faith in the Christ, and his burial in baptism in order to prove that faith. This whole process passes one through the "strait gate" and identifies him with the "body of Christ," which is the church. Colossians 1:18.

But if one does not choose to follow this way which is outlined in the word of the Lord he can enter the "wide gate" and travel the "broad way" that leads to destruction. Be sure that you do not criticise the means of entrance through the "strait gate" which has been provided of the Lord, and then offer to man some other way unknown in the gospel of the Christ. The Lord has warned that "there is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the ends thereof are the ways of death." Proverbs 16:25. Let us accept the way provided of the Lord and reject all substitutes offered by man.

Concerning the "wide gate" and the "broad way" Jesus said that many would enter this way and travel to their own destruction. What a sad picture! Many are entering this "wide gate" through misinformation—a false teacher has offered unto them something different from the gospel of the Christ. Because of this misguidance, many have entered the wrong gate and are traveling the wrong road. They are not aware of this, and feel perfectly safe in their travel, even though they are traveling the way that leads away from life and not to it. On this "broad road" man can take with him anything that he

may desire; he has to give up nothing of this world on this "broad way." There is no sacrifice of pleasure; you may have them all.

But do not be deceived through the false reasoning of men and thus be led astray from the "narrow way" that leads to life. Paul warns against such deception when he tells the Galatian brethren that "if man or angel preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema." Galatians 1:6-12. The gospel which was preached by Paul was taught to him by the revelation of the Spirit of God. He taught with as much authority as the Lord chose to give to him by the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

May we thus heed the warnings of our Lord in that we are not to accept the teaching of men, but only the teaching which we find revealed in the New Testament in order that we may enter the "strait gate" and travel the "narrow way" that leads unto life. This will not be an easy way to travel at all times—much will be demanded of the traveler as he makes his way toward the city of God. He must be on his guard constantly lest he be led away from the path of right.

IX. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF CITIZENSHIP. Matthew 7:15-29.

Concerning the responsibility of citizenship, Jesus said: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know them."

Here is a solemn warning for all generations. All the false prophets did not live in the days of Jesus—some of them are living today. There are false prophets or teachers today, and there will be when God in his wisdom declares that time is no more. These false prophets are religious teachers who deceive the people in their offer of a different entrance into the kingdom of heaven than the one offered by Jesus. Jesus said, "I am the door," and no one can enter but by him. These false prophets offer to man a way to heaven different from the one offered by our Lord. They act the part of a teacher of God's Word, but they utter falsehoods in the name of true teaching, and thus lead individuals into the wrong way—the way that ends in destruction. The false prophets here referred to by Jesus were those teachers who were claiming to teach men correctly the way of life, but they were denying the teaching of Jesus. Our Lord told his disciples that many false prophets would arise after his departure, for "many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many . . . For there shall arise false Christs, and shall show great signs

and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Matthew 24:5, 24.

Paul makes a similar prediction when he says, "And I know this, after my departure shall greivous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock." Acts 20:29. These were not only false in their lives, they were also false in their teaching. They were wolves in sheep's clothing. They appeared gentle, meek, inoffensive in their outward conduct, and used "persuasive words of man's wisdom" in their teaching to deceive the people and create a following after them as religious leaders themselves. False teachers of this type exist today. We have religious teachers now who are not satisfied to teach just what God has revealed as to the conditions of pardon which are revealed in the New Testament, but instead are teaching doctrine and commandments of men. They are offering something else which they claim will do just as well. They also contend that all that is necessary to please the Lord is to be honest and sincere in one's religious convictions. They will include enough Scripture in their teaching, although very often misapplied, to make the people think that they are teaching just what God has revealed. They may proclaim a partial gospel, but not the whole gospel. Some even have a guide which they call their creed, which guide serves them in their regulation of their worship unto God. It may read a great deal like the New Testament, but it cannot read just like it, for then it would be a copy of the New Testament.

We should have a creed, but that creed should be the Christ, and our guide should be the New Testament. That is all that we need; and anything more or less than that is displeasing unto our Lord, and he who offers more or less than the New Testament is certainly a false prophet or a false teacher in religious matters. One difficulty with those who have a guide different from the New Testament is that they will follow what the guide teaches rather than what the New Testament teaches. In other words, they follow the teaching of men rather than the teaching of the Lord. They teach and practice those things because they are in their guide and not because they may be found in the New Testament. In many cases those things found in the guide are not found in the New Testament—they are an addition unto the Word of the Lord. Thus, he who offers anything which is not authorized by the Lord in the New Testament is a false prophet, and Jesus here warns his disciples against all such. We must be on our guard against all such people lest they lead us astray through their plausible reasoning or enticing words of man's wisdom. A fine motto to follow would be, "We will speak where the Bible speaks, and we will be silent where the Bible is silent." If this principle had been followed through the centuries by all the religious

people who claim to worship according to the New Testament, there would be no division in the religious world.

If all religious teachers of today would heed the simple and timely advice of Paul when he said, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth," there would be more gospel taught and more souls saved. See 2 Timothy 2:15. Religious unity would thus be the result. But until this is done, and men agree to speak where the Bible speaks and to be silent where it is silent, religious unity is hopelessly impossible. We must take the Lord's plan of redemption as he gave it and no longer offer the teaching of men as a substitute if we wish not to be false teachers, but instead to be the teachers of the Word of the Lord. Jesus said his disciples must "beware of false prophets" who would not teach His Word.

Jesus said, "By their fruits, ye shall know them." Teachers are to be judged by their conduct as men, and also by the effect of their teaching. The standard of both of these is the gospel of the Christ which is recorded in the New Testament. If the life of the teacher is contrary to the teaching of the gospel of Christ, this teacher must be avoided regardless of how much we may have thought of this person as a friend. If his teaching is not in harmony with the gospel of Christ, this teacher must be avoided regardless of how much he may be educated in worldly wisdom. There are religious teachers who know what the Bible says but they do not believe it—they do not believe that the Bible is the authoritative Word of God. There are too many religious teachers today who are not altogether fair with the truth as it is revealed in the Bible. They teach part of it, but some misapply a large part of what they do teach. Let us keep the teaching of our Lord in its original setting and get the lesson intended of him when the message was written.

Jesus then follows with an illustration which shows that righteousness is not produced from an unrighteous life, for out of the heart are the issues of life. If the life is evil, then the heart back of the life must be evil. "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." Proverbs 23:7.

In the closing of the "The Sermon on the Mount" Jesus used the illustration of the two builders in order that he might unfold unto his disciples, and to all people, the importance of doing what He has asked men and women to do. What a sad picture it will be at the end of time when so many people will hear fall from the lips of our Lord, "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity, for I never knew you." What a sad disappointment to be honest in our religious convictions and then learn in the end that we were wrong—that we had been led away from the path of right by false prophets. By believing that the message of the teacher is the truth without examining the Word of the

Lord for ourselves, we accept the message and conform our lives to its teaching, but at the judgment learn when it is too late that we have followed a false teacher. What a tragedy!

We plead with all men to hear what the Lord has revealed unto the world through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This teaching is recorded in the New Testament which should serve as our only rule of faith and practice. These men wrote the New Testament in order that it might serve as our guide in all matters religious. We plead with you to believe what they taught, and obey what they commanded. You cannot go wrong here, and will not have accepted a substitute which some man has arranged. Read your New Testament; believe it, and do what it commands of you. Examine your New Testament in order that you may be sure that you have done what the Lord requires of men and women in order to salvation. We cannot afford not to travel the way that leads home. If we travel some other way we will be lost forever in the darkness of eternity.

What a gloom was cast over all the earth to last until the end of time when man sinned in the Garden of Eden, and the whole world was condemned by the sentence of death when it was pronounced as the result of that sin. The executioner has been doing his work now for nearly six thousand years. The decree has gone forth—all men must die. There is no escape from this penalty. All must face it, and it is just around the corner; we know not how soon we shall be called to meet the messenger that shall call us from our earthly habitation. But our Lord followed the condemned to the execution, and beyond it. He entered the strong man's house and spoiled it, making it possible for man to be ransomed from the grave. He now holds the keys of the unseen world, and will, at God's command, unlock the gates of the world and all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and come forth "some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting condemnation."

Then all those who have entered the "strait gate" and have traveled the "narrow way" that leads home shall be robed in white, and shall walk the street of the New Jerusalem with the redeemed of the world, and unite in that grand song of "Blessing, and glory, and honor, and power, and dominion, to the Lord our God." It shall then be that the "tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be their God. And he shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and death shall be no more, nor shall mourning, nor crying, nor pain, be any more: because the former things are passed away. And he who sat on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new."

What a message! What a sermon delivered by our Lord as he sat on the mountain side with the multitudes before him! What a Constitution for Christianity! What a "Bill of Rights for the Christian!"

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